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OUR CHANCELLOR;

SKETCHES FOR A HISTORICAL PICTURE.

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

London:

MACMILLAN AND CO.

1884.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
STAMFORD STREET AND CHARING CROSS.



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OUR CHANCELLOR.

CHAPTER I.

BISMARCK AND THE FRENCH.

On June 16, 1860, Bismarck wrote from Petersburg to a Prussian diplomatist:—"Augsburger & Co." (the diplomatists of the Central German States) "are still afraid that I shall become a Minister, and think they can hinder me in that direction by abusing me and railing at my Franco-Russian tendencies. I feel honoured in being feared by Prussia's foes. As a matter of fact, my political predilections were so carefully sifted this spring by the Court and the Ministry, that both know exactly what I think, and how entirely I look to our national feeling for strength and ability to defend ourselves. If I have sold myself to the Foul Fiend, it is to a Teutonic, not to a Gallic devil." Shortly afterwards (August 22) he complains in another letter from Petersburg of systematic calumnies in the press accusing him of having supported Russo-French proposals that Prussia should give up her Rhenish provinces in exchange for territory in the interior of Germany, and replies thereto:—"I will pay a thousand golden Fredericks down on the nail to any man who can prove that these Russo-French proposals have been brought to my knowledge by any human being. During the whole of my stay in

Germany I have never counselled any other course, than in case of war, to rely exclusively upon the national force of Germany."

Even later on libels of the above description obtained currency, and were credited, not only by Progressists and Ultramontanists, but by exalted personages at Court. They owed their origin either to mendacious party-spirit or to the misapprehensions of persons who heard the bell but not the knocker. What follows will enable the reader to get at the exact truth, if he will take the trouble to read it by the light of the fifth chapter (Bismarck and Austria) of the preceding volume, in reference to Austrian policy during the Crimean war and to the attitude of the German Central States towards France. The contents of that chapter demonstrate that for some considerable time Bismarck had been compelled to take a French alliance into his calculations, but had never even dreamt of purchasing France's friendship by a cession of German territory.

When he was Envoy to the Bund he wrote to Manteuffel (April 26, 1856) about the position Prussia would be placed in by a Franco-Russian League, which then appeared probable; and, after pointing out the comparative worthlessness of an alliance with England, the untrustworthiness of the German Central States, and the faithless selfishness of the Vienna Cabinet, concluded as follows:— "If a Russo-French alliance with warlike purposes should really come about, it is my conviction that we could not afford to be reckoned amongst its opponents. . . . In order to keep every chance open to ourselves, we can do little for the moment but display a little inexpensive friendliness towards Louis Napoleon and repel any attempt on the part of Russia to take us in tow gratuitously and prematurely. When the Paris peace shall be ratified, no doubt the

respective Monarchs will exchange decorations, and it would certainly do us no good to exclude ourselves from this amiable demonstration at Paris, or even to participate in it sensibly later than others. You may be sure that Louis Napoleon, with his brand-new Court and personal vanity, will think more of the performance or omission of this act of amity than would the wearers of more ancient crowns." A little later (May 10) he recommends his chief to cultivate friendly relations to France, in view of a possible alliance with her, to what immediate end appears in the following remarks. "We cannot arrange the mutual relations of other Great Powers as we could wish them to be, but we can take the liberty of utilising, in conformity with our own security and interests, arrangements made without our co-operation, and possibly in contrariety to our wishes. Our relations to Russia, England and Austria are such as to offer no hindrance to a *rapprochement* towards any one of those Powers, if circumstances should render that step advisable. I do not say that the contrary is the case in respect to France; but there are so many germs of mutual estrangement in our respective historical and dynastic circumstances that nothing short of the most careful nursing of our relations with that country can possibly enable us to join her as easily as we could join any one of the three Powers above alluded to. I am not recommending a Franco-Prussian alliance *à priori;* but I deem it beyond dispute that our position would lose weight, and that other Cabinets would begin to treat us with less consideration, as soon as the contingency of an alliance with France should be effaced from the category of Prussia's potential resolves; and we may be unavoidably forced into choosing the least of two evils. Admitting this, it follows that our relations to France, for the time being, must be such as will allow us at any moment to

drew nearer to her without injury or humiliation to ourselves; and that the other Courts may remain under the impression that such a course is open to us. . . . Travellers returning from Paris relate that the Emperor Napoleon has expressed to Prussian officers the wish and hope to be present at a review of Prussian troops. As he seldom says anything unadvisedly or without an object, it may be inferred that he would like to be invited to Berlin. How this may be Hatzfeldt will know better than I; if it be correct I should regard his visit to our capital as a triumphant conclusion to Prussian policy in the Oriental question, and a shining illustration of its correctness. The Autocrat of the French just now exercises so decisive an influence upon European policy, and his friendship—or even the mere credit of its outward seeming—is so eagerly sought for by the mightiest Monarchs, that it would not only be a formal proof of recognition on his part, but a fact of political moment, were he to aspire to the honour of visiting our most gracious Sovereign before calling upon any other reigning personage. We may regret that such is the case; but we cannot alter facts, though we can utilise them; and, as matters stand, in my opinion a visit of the French Emperor to Berlin would be a diplomatic victory for us—our omission to invite him, if he really has a fancy to come, a political mistake."

It would really seem that the Emperor of the French at that time was earnestly disposed to make friends with Prussia. On November 4 Bismarck reported to his Minister a conversation he had had with Prince Napoleon during an evening party at the French Ambassador's. "The Prince devoted himself to me with an exclusiveness that was rather distressing to the rest of the company, and told me *inter alia* that the Neuenburg affair would turn out a lucky

incident if it should bring about a *rapprochement* between King Frederick William and the Emperor Napoleon. An alliance between Prussia and France, 'the two most civilised peoples in the world,' would be the most natural of all Leagues, and equally advantageous to both. France only demanded territorial increment if other Powers sought to enlarge their possessions." When the question of the Neuenburg Royalists (1857) threatened to lead to a Prussian campaign in Switzerland, and—at the conference assembled in Paris to settle the dispute—England and Austria opposed Prussia's claims, Count Walewski, the representative of France, "endeavoured to baffle England's objections upon each successive point;" and the Emperor (with whom Bismarck had several conversations on the subject by the order of his Government) was "very nice and pleasant," as the Chancellor himself told us during the Franco-Prussian war. Napoleon however would not comply with the King's wish that the Prussian troops told off to attack the Swiss should march through Elsass and Lothringen, on the ground that their doing so would arouse too much excitement in France. In other respects he approved of the undertaking, observing that "he should like nothing better than to see that nest of democrats swept away." He also shewed himself very friendly and willing to oblige in another question, at that time discussed between Bismarck and himself, namely, the Schleswig-Holstein business; and when Bismarck explained to the Emperor what, in his opinion, Denmark should do and leave undone in this matter to content Germany, and mentioned how desirable he thought it that the foreign Envoys at Copenhagen (in particular the representative of France) should privily support German claims as put forward by a Federal Commissioner there, Napoleon promised him the required

assistance, provided the existence of the Danish Monarchy should not be called in question by Germany's claims. In the following year, too, Bismarck had no reason to anticipate that the Emperor would take part against Germany in the question of the Duchies. In a report dated June 30, 1858, he observed :—"As far as I can see there is no reason to fear that France will seek a quarrel with Germany over *this* question. It is just possible that (should England lend herself to such a step) she may, later on, take up a demonstrative attitude in favour of Denmark together with Great Britain. But if France be on the look out for a continental war, in which England would not stand by her, I do not think the Emperor Napoleon is so unwise as to pick out the Holstein affair to fight about; for, if there is a question which just now would stir up national feeling throughout Germany and unite German Governments against France, even despite themselves, it is this one. Hence it is far from probable that Napoleon—if he deems himself compelled to get up a war—will choose German territory for his attack. Whosoever asserts that he will select (as the pretext for that attack) a question which has been for years past flaunted on high as a symbol of German national honour, regarded by every Teuton as the soundest test of patriotism and the surest means of achieving popular favour, has special reasons of his own, either for creating a panic, or for impugning the sound common-sense of the French Emperor."

This appreciation of Napoleon was proved to be absolutely correct in January 1864. When Lord Russell proposed to France an "eventual co-operation with England, by which material support should be afforded to Denmark in her resistance to ambition," Napoleon declined the suggestion, and his refusal was thus explained in a

despatch of his Minister Drouyn de l'Huys:—"The Emperor recognises the importance of the London Treaty, so far as the latter aims at maintaining the equilibrium and peace of Europe. Fully approving of that object the French Government, however, opines that circumstances call for some alteration of the treaty. The Emperor has always been disposed to accord great consideration to the feelings and efforts of nationalities. It cannot be ignored that the national feelings and efforts of Germany are bent upon a closer union with the Germans of Schleswig-Holstein. Any step that would place him under the obligation to contend in arms against Germany's wishes would be repugnant to the Emperor. Schleswig and England lie far apart. But the territories of Germany and France touch, and a war between these Powers would be the most calamitous and risky enterprise the Emperor could possibly undertake. Besides, the Emperor cannot but bear in mind that he has been made the object of mistrust and suspicion in Europe on account of his alleged projects of aggrandisement upon the Rhine. To commence a war on his Rhenish frontier would lend still greater force to this baseless and unjustifiable accusation. . . . Should the balance of power be seriously menaced later on, the Emperor would be disposed to take fresh measures in the interest of France and Europe; but at present he desires to reserve full freedom of action to his government."

Napoleon's forbearance was based, as we shall see, upon the calculation that it would predispose Prussia to come to an understanding with him at some future period respecting certain enterprises, to be undertaken in common for his advantage. On the other hand, Bismarck took care to foster the Emperor's friendly feeling in every way compatible with the interests of Germany. Speaking on this

subject (February 21, 1879) in the Reichstag, he observed: "I had every reason for keeping up this good understanding, by means of which I succeeded—not only whilst I was Envoy in Paris, but throughout the difficulties of the Polish 1863 crisis, when France was opposed to us—in maintaining such a favourable disposition towards us, that, in the Danish question, France's friendly behaviour cut the ground from under the feet of other powers which had a fancy not to allow us to fight out our quarrel with Denmark single-handed. Still more, during our heavier struggle with Austria in 1866, France's self-restraint would certainly not have been carried so far as (fortunately for us) it was, had I not bestowed every possible care upon our relations with her, thereby bringing about a 'benevolent' connection with the Emperor Napoleon, who, for his part, liked to have treaties with us better than with others; but who undoubtedly did not foresee that the 1866 war would terminate in our favour. He reckoned upon our being beaten, and upon then according us his protection—benevolently, but not gratuitously. Politically speaking, however, it was lucky for us, in my opinion, that he remained amicably disposed towards us, and particularly towards me, up to the battle of Sadowa."

The Emperor's good-will was partly the result of Bismarck's conciliatory behaviour, and partly of the hope that—by exchanging favours with him in time of peace, or by effecting later on an alliance having for its purpose common action in the direction of a common goal, or by playing a double game of temptation and deceit—he might attain certain ends steadfastly kept in view by Napoleon throughout all his dealings with Germany. In this latter respect he misjudged the Prussian statesman with whom he had to do. Just as Bismarck (in the sixties) seems to have thought Napoleon more intelligent than, upon further experience,

he pronounced him to be (in Versailles he spoke of him to us as "lacking information," "stupid and sentimental" and "a Tiefenbacher") so it is manifest that Napoleon did not understand Bismarck's capacity and character, that he mistook his ease of manner for frivolity, his frankness for inconsiderateness, and was deluded enough to imagine him wanting in patriotic feeling. Napoleon regarded Bismarck as a person at once frivolous and simple. "*Ce n'est pas un homme sérieux*," he said of him, just after one of Bismarck's visits in Paris; and it is not impossible that the latter may have given him some cause to express that opinion. But he did not look deep enough. There was one amongst his *entourage* gifted with clearer sight and brighter intelligence than he, although not a professional politician. Prospère Merimée, writing to "Une Inconnue" (October, 14, 1863), after having made Bismarck's acquaintance at Biarritz, remarked:—"Another personage, M. de Bismarck, pleased me still better. He is a tall German, very polite and not at all *naïf*. There is no sentiment about him, but plenty of wit. He has quite captivated me." Later on (July 15, 1866) he wrote to his friend Panizzi:—"As for Bismarck, he is my hero. Although himself a German, he seems to understand the Germans thoroughly, and to take them for the blockheads they are." In a third letter (Dec. 1867), after stigmatising "Ollivier *et tutti quanti*" as "word-spinners and second-rate actors, who never take anybody in," he adds:—"We are getting more and more crumpled up every day. There is only one great man left; and that is M. de Bismarck."

We now come to Napoleon's successive attempts to gain Bismarck over to a compact that should prove profitable to France. Hints and proposals in this direction reached him even before he undertook the direction of the Prussian

Foreign Office; for, in his Circular to the diplomatic representatives of the North German Confederation (July 29, 1870), he expressly states:—"The French Government's endeavours to secure the aid of Prussia in carrying out its covetous projects with respect to Belgium and the Rhenish frontier were brought to my knowledge before 1862. . . . These tendencies of the French Government first became manifest (as producing a visible effect upon European politics) in France's friendly behaviour towards us during the German-Danish difficulty. Her subsequent ill-humour with us, anent the Treaty of Gastein, was caused by the apprehension that a lasting consolidation of the Austro-Prussian Alliance would deprive the Cabinet of Paris of the fruits of that behaviour."

The ill-humour alluded to, expressed itself in Drouyn de l'Huys' Circular Despatch of August 29, 1865, denouncing the Austro-Prussian action in the Elbe Duchies as arbitrary and violent—repugnant to a sense of justice and to the dictates of conscience. Napoleon indignant at violent proceedings! The Man of December a prophet of righteousness and conscientiousness! The truth was that the Gastein Convention crossed his plans and expectations. "France," continued Bismarck (Circular Despatch, July 29, 1870) "had reckoned in 1865 upon war breaking out between us and Austria, and drew nearer to us readily enough as soon as our relations to Vienna became troubled." In a declaration made by the French Government at Berlin (September 23, 1865), it was observed that the views expressed in Drouyn de l'Huys' Circular Despatch (August 29, 1863) need not be regarded as more binding than the Treaty of Gastein itself, and that France noticed with pleasure, according to the Berlin Cabinet's assurance, that the latter agreement was of a purely provisional nature.

The Gastein Convention was, in fact, only a time-bargain, postponing the definitive solution of the German question; and as that solution, in all probability, could only be achieved by a war between Austria and Prussia; as, moreover, it might be confidently anticipated that the great majority of the German States would side with the former; it became necessary for Bismarck to make sure of French non-intervention on the one hand, and, on the other, to secure an ally whose strength might counterbalance the support given to Austria by the German States. Such an ally was Italy, with whom Prussia had hitherto not stood upon the most friendly footing, but towards whom her Austrian difficulty compelled her to turn for assistance. Italy, however, was under obligations to Napoleon, and dependent upon his good will to boot. Therefore Bismarck had to come to an understanding with the Emperor of the French in this direction as well as others. The then Prussian Envoy in Paris not proving equal to conducting the needful negotiations, Bismarck himself (November 1863) went to see Napoleon at Biarritz, and talked the matter over with him *tête-à-tête*. Nothing positively authentic has transpired respecting the interviews that then took place; but it may be concluded from Napoleon's subsequent behaviour that the Prussian Minister—whilst avoiding any binding obligations on the part of Prussia—succeeded in inducing the Emperor to promise him benevolent neutrality in the case of an Austro-Prussian war, and furtherance of his projects with regard to Italy. We shall soon see that Napoleon entertained an *arrière-pensée*—that he hoped Prussia would be defeated, so that he might have an opportunity of offering her his assistance, to be paid for by a cession of German territory. But of all this nothing was said at Biarritz. Later on Napoleon repeatedly essayed, by offering his aid

against Austria, to persuade Bismarck to make concessions such as might satisfy French cupidity. In the often-quoted Circular Despatch of 1870 it is observed: "Before the War with Austria broke out, proposals were repeatedly made to me, sometimes by relatives of the French Emperor (Prince Napoleon), sometimes by confidential agents, all of which aimed at smaller or larger transactions in the nature of achieving territorial aggrandisement to both France and Prussia. Now Luxemburg was hinted at—then, the 1814 frontier with Landau and Saarlouis—again, matters of even more importance, including (for instance) French Switzerland and the vexed question where the language-frontier line was to be drawn in Piedmont. In May 1866 these suggestions took the form of a proposal for an offensive and defensive treaty, the following bases of which remained in my hands:—" 1. If the Congress comes off, the Allies are to negotiate in common for the cession of Venetia to Italy and the incorporation of the Elbe Duchies in Prussia. 2. If the Congress comes to nothing, a Franco-Prussian offensive and defensive alliance. 3. Ten days after the Congress shall break up the King of Prussia will commence hostilities. 4. Should the Congress not assemble, Prussia will attack thirty days after signing the present Treaty. 5. The Emperor of the French will declare war upon Austria as soon as hostilities between Prussia and Austria shall have begun. 6. Neither contracting party shall conclude a separate peace with Austria. 7. Peace shall only be concluded upon the following terms:—Italy shall get Venetia; Prussia, the hereafter specified German territories with seven or eight millions of souls, as she shall select them, and Federal Reform in the Prussian sense of the word; France, the districts between the Moselle and the Rhine, with 500,000 souls, from Prussia; the Bavarian territories on the left bank of the

Rhine; and Birkenfeld, Homburg and Darmstadt (Hessian territory on the left bank of the Rhine) with 213,000 souls. 8. A military and maritime Convention between France and Prussia, as soon as the Alliance Treaty shall be signed. 9. The King of Italy shall join the Alliance." Anybody who is acquainted with the secret diplomatic and military history of the year 1868 will perceive, flickering through the crannies of these clauses, the policy observed by France, firstly towards Italy (with whom she was also in negotiation) and secondly towards Prussia and Italy together. After we had (in June 1866) declined the above project of alliance, despite repeated and menacing warnings to accept it, the French Government could only reckon upon our defeat by Austria, and upon taking advantage of our eventual reverses. For this French politicians commenced making preparations to the very best of their ability.

These last words refer to the series of negotiations which resulted in the Franco-Austrian Secret Treaty of June 12, 1866. Napoleon played a double game, as was his wont. Whilst seeming to favour Prussia, and personally endeavouring to gain her over, he directed his Minister of Foreign Affairs (theretofore left in utter ignorance of the whole project) to negotiate with the Vienna Cabinet respecting the conditions of French neutrality, ardently wished and sought for by the Austrian Government. Drouyn de l'Huys was of opinion that war between Prussia and Austria must be prevented, and that, should this prove impossible, France must cast her influence into the scale on behalf of Austria. Later on he spoke very decisively in this sense to a Guelphic agent (see Meding's 'Memoiren zur Zeitgeschichte,' Part II., p. 54), as follows:—"Old France found the House of Hapsburg opposed to it everywhere—in Germany, Italy and the Netherlands—and it therefore became the object

of the Bourbon policy to contend against Austria in all directions, to shatter her power and undermine her influence. This is no longer the case. Wherever France formerly encountered the Hapsburg Empire in her path she now comes into collision with Prussia. Prussia aims at the political and military unification of Germany; Napoleonic France, therefore, is called upon to advance in every direction against Prussia and on behalf of Germany." Napoleon instructed his Minister to take action in conformity with this view of the matter; and, whilst he himself was striving to contract an alliance with Prussia, he took care to keep the alternative of a compact with Vienna open, should his endeavours at Berlin fail. Should the Austrians prove victorious, he thought he saw his way to make an arrangement with Prussia upon terms favourable to France. Should Prussia gain the day, he could plead Austria's cause, and at least be sure of taking a hand in the diplomatic rubber. Meanwhile he was in a position to cause all manner of hindrances to prudish Prussia. The Franco-Austrian negotiations were somewhat spun out, and only led to an understanding after Bismarck had rejected Napoleon's proposals in May. It was then that France pledged herself to remain absolutely neutral, in the case of an Austro-Prussia war, and to do her best to keep the Italians from taking part in the struggle. On her part Austria promised, should her arms triumph, to cede Venetia to France in case Italy should participate in the war and be beaten; not to alter the *status quo ante bellum* as far as Lombardy was concerned; and finally, to obtain France's consent, when peace should be made, before accepting any territorial change that might upset European equilibrium. The advantages accruing to Napoleon through these conditions are obvious; he might eventually put

the Italians, as in 1859, under an obligation to him by handing over Venetia to Victor Emmanuel, and, however matters might turn out, he secured a claim to take part in the peace-making transactions. To this latter privilege he acquired a further right by declaring that, should Austria win the fray, he would not oppose a territorial enlargement of the Empire, as long as such aggrandisement should not alter the balance of power in Europe, and as Austria should refrain from unifying Germany under her own hegemony.

The proposals made by Napoleon to Bismarck resulted as we have already mentioned, from the former's ignorance of German affairs and erroneous judgment of the man to whom he addressed himself. The 1870 Circular Despatch observes: "I scarcely need point out that the French Government's belief in the possibility of such a transaction with a German Minister, whose position is conditional upon his self-identification with German national feeling, can only be explained by the fact that French statesmen are absolutely unacquainted with the fundamental conditions of the very existence of other peoples. Had the diplomatic agents of the Paris Cabinet been ordinarily capable of taking stock of German conditions, the French Government would never have yielded itself up to the illusion that Prussia could ever consent to settle Germany's affairs with the aid of France. . . . I never for a moment doubted the impossibility of falling in with any of the proposals made to me; but I deemed it opportune, in the interests of peace" (before 1866, and during that year, in order to hinder France from contracting an alliance with Prussia's enemies) "to let the French statesmen revel in their extraordinary illusions as long as might be without promising them the least thing, even verbally."

According to a private letter from Benedetti to Drouyn de l'Huys, dated January 4, 1866, this was by no means

the case. The French Ambassador refers therein to a conversation he had had the previous day with Bismarck, as follows:—"I gather from his hints that the King persists in repudiating the very possibility of ceding any portion of the present Prussian territories. . . . In His Majesty's opinion (so, at least, says M. de Bismarck) the compensations he might feel disposed to offer to France would be selected from amongst those districts on his frontiers in which French is spoken. The Minister-President had observed to the King that these districts must be conquered before they could be disposed of. But he let fall the words 'If France were to demand Cologne, Bonn and Mayence, I would rather retire from the political stage than consent to their cession.'" Benedetti's report goes on to say:—"Without my urging him to make any further declarations he hinted that he did not deem it impossible to induce the King [to give up to us the banks of the Upper Moselle, which—with Luxemburg, where union with France would be cheerfully accepted—would regulate our frontier in a manner quite satisfactory to us."

The Chancellor has publicly (in the Lower House) declared these last assertions, and similar ones put forward by La Marmora, to be false; and future historians will not hesitate a moment as to whether they shall believe him or the Frenchman who passed through the Oriental school of lying and intriguing in Egypt, the member of the Italian Consorteria, and those whom both appealed to as witnesses. On the 16th January, 1874, Von Mallinckrodt, referring to La Marmora's "Revelations" in the pamphlet "Un po' più di luce," then just published, vehemently reproached the Chancellor with having said, during his negotiations with General Govone in 1866, that he was less a German than a Prussian in feeling, and would not hesitate long to

cede to the French a slice of the Rhine's left bank—say the Rhenish Palatinate, and those portions of the Coblenz and Trèves Government Districts which lie to the right of the Moselle. As soon as he heard of this attack on the part of the Ultramontane Leader, Bismarck hurried down to the House, and there declared:—"I am compelled to stigmatise this assertion in the strongest terms, as a vile and lying invention, which the Deputy has, of course, not fabricated, but which has been fabricated elsewhere. Not a single syllable of it is true. I never held out the prospect to anybody of ceding a single German village, or even as much as a clover-field. Everything that has been alleged and circulated of that description I declare to have been, from first to last, what I have already said it is—a vile calumnious lie, invented to blacken my character."

With respect to the Govone incident the truth was that the Italian negotiator besought Bismarck to come to terms with France before the war, so that Italy might be safeguarded; that the Minister-President replied, "Such an arrangement is desirable, but very difficult to make, because France exacts conditions we cannot fulfil;" that Govone then inquired whether there were not some morsel of land across the Rhine, the inhabitants of which would be content to become French subjects; and that Bismarck gave answer, "There is nothing of the sort; even French agents, employed to sound popular feeling in such districts, report that no vote in favour of France could be obtained therein, save by fraudulent means; moreover, public opinion in Germany would sooner forgive Prussia for a second Olmuetz, *vis-à-vis* of Austria, than for ceding any German territory to a foreign Power."

The war between Prussia and Austria with her German

following was soon brought to a close by Prussian victories. How Napoleon claimed and exercised the right of mediation during peace-negotiations has been shown in the previous chapter. Prussia did not reject his proposal of an armistice (made at Austria's request), but did not unconditionally accept the offers resulting therefrom. The definitive peace was concluded between Prussia and Austria, without France's co-operation; and the latter's intervention proved of no practical advantage to her, except that New Germany was divided by the Main-Line into two portions, of which the Southern one might possibly become dependent upon France. Bismarck had scarcely got back to Berlin when Napoleon came to the front with new demands for compensation. Prussia, however, against his will, by annexations, and by the acquisition of North German military reinforcements of considerable magnitude, had become a first-class Power, strong enough to repel suggestions of this kind. Nevertheless the Emperor tried his luck. On July 26, 1866, Benedetti had had a conversation with Bismarck, at Nikolsburg, in which he acquainted him generally with the demands in question. On his arrival in Berlin he received from Vichy (where Napoleon was then staying) a telegraphic despatch containing the text of a secret compact which he was to submit for acceptance to the Prussian Government. It ran as follows :—" Article I.—The French Empire re-enters into possession of the territories which (now belonging to Prussia) were within the French frontiers of 1814. Article II.—Prussia pledges herself to exact from the King of Bavaria and the Grand Duke of Hesse the cession to France (against compensation) of the territories owned by them on the left bank of the Rhine. Article III.—The arrangements connecting certain territories belonging to the King of the Netherlands with the German

Confederation, as well as those which concern the right of garrison in the Fortress of Luxemburg, are hereby revoked." Benedetti wrote back at once that he would leave no stone unturned to bring about the unmodified acceptance of these dispositions, however stubborn might prove the resistance with which he expected to be encountered. "Convinced," he continued, "that the Imperial Government has kept within the bounds of equity by limiting itself to demanding the guarantees rendered necessary by Prussia's territorial aggrandisement, I shall not be easily induced to put up with alterations of any moment. In this matter I regard firmness as the best means—frankly speaking, the only argument—to be employed, and shall therefore resolutely reject any proposals lacking in consideration for us. I shall steadfastly point out that Prussia would ignore the dictates of justice and prudence, besides proving her ingratitude, were she to refuse to us the guarantee which the enlargement of her frontiers compels us to demand. But, to go cleverly to work, I am of opinion that I—taking the Minister-President's character into consideration—should avoid being a witness to the first impression that will be made upon him by the news that we require the Rhine-bank and the fortress of Mayence to be restored to us."

The French Ambassador, therefore, on August 5, forwarded the draft treaty to Count Bismarck with a private note requesting him to look over France's proposals carefully, and placing himself at the Chancellor's disposition in order to discuss them. Bismarck "did not hesitate for a moment about the answer, which could not be other than a positive refusal." On the 6th he had an interview with Benedetti, during which the latter warmly recommended the French demands, and threatened a declaration of war

should they be rejected. Bismarck replied: "Very well; let it be war then!" but advised the Ambassador to go to Paris, and avert that eventuality. Benedetti declared that he should certainly go to Paris, but only to urge the Emperor to maintain his demands; for he believed the very existence of the dynasty would be endangered unless public feeling in France should be tranquillised by some such concession on the part of Germany. Bismarck rejoined: "You had better point out to His Majesty the Emperor that, under certain circumstances, this war may become a struggle fought with revolutionary weapons; and that, as far as revolutionary dangers are concerned, the German dynasty would probably exhibit greater firmness than that of the Emperor Napoleon." With this message Benedetti went off to Paris, where he appears to have counselled withdrawal of the above demands. At any rate, Napoleon changed his mind, and Bismarck was informed that "Benedetti's instructions of the 5th had been extorted from the Emperor whilst he was unwell." About the same time (August 12) Napoleon wrote a letter to Lavalette which reminds one strikingly of the grapes pronounced sour by the fox when he could not get at them. It runs:—"In consequence of certain conferences between Benedetti and M. de Bismarck, M. Drouyn de l'Huys thought fit to send to Berlin a draft treaty concerning claims we might put forward to compensation. In my opinion this document ought to have been kept secret; but a good deal of noise has been made about it abroad, and the newspapers have gone so far as to say that the Rhine-Province has been refused to us. From my own conversation with Benedetti, I gather that, with but little profit, we should have the whole of Germany against us. It is of importance that public opinion should not be allowed to err upon this

point. Contradict all these reports energetically .... France's real interest is not to obtain an insignificant increase of territory, but to assist Germany to organise itself in a manner corresponding to our requirements and to those of Europe."

Bismarck's firm attitude had produced the desired effect. Mayence and the Franco-Prussian frontiers of 1814 were recognised in Paris to be unattainable, and thenceforth were asked for no more, or only *en passant*, as it were. On August 16, however, commenced another act in the drama of French compensation-claims; for one M. Chauvy, on that day, brought a letter from Paris to the Ambassador at Berlin, containing instructions for fresh negotiations. They were as follows:—"1. These negotiations shall be of a friendly character. 2. They shall be essentially confidential. 3. According to the prospects opened to you, your demands shall pass through three phases. In the first—having dealt with the 1814 frontiers and the incorporation of Belgium as one question—you will demand the cession of Landau, Saarbruecken and the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg by published treaty, as well as full authority to annex Belgium ultimately, on the basis of an offensive and defensive treaty of alliance, which must remain secret. If you find it impossible to obtain these conditions, you will renounce Saarlouis and Saarbruecken—Landau, too, an old, badly-fortified town, our possession of which would stir up German feeling against us—and limit your avowed arrangements to the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, your secret ones to the reunion of Belgium with France. Thirdly, if the pure and simple amalgamation of Belgium with France should encounter serious obstacles, you will content yourself with an Article making Antwerp a Free Town, which will certainly mitigate England's opposition to the annexation of the rest

of Belgium. To sum up:—First of all an avowed treaty, allotting to us Luxemburg at the very least; then a secret convention settling the terms of an offensive and defensive alliance and authorising France to annex Belgium at the first favourable opportunity; lastly, Prussia's pledge to stand by us *vi et armis.*" In compliance with these instructions, Benedetti drew up a treaty with Prussia which he forwarded to his Minister (August 23) with the remark:—"I need not tell you why Landau and Saarbruecken are not alluded to. I am fully convinced that we should get ourselves into insurmountable difficulties by insisting upon them, and have therefore confined myself to Luxemburg and Belgium." In reply Benedetti received a letter from Paris saying that his draft had made a good impression, and that time was required to think over it; treating, moreover, of the necessity of indemnifying the King of the Netherlands for Luxemburg with Prussian territory and of the pecuniary sacrifices possibly exacted by the treaty, and putting forward the views (pretty correctly) that the rights of garrison established by the former Federal Constitution had ceased to exist, wherefore their maintenance in South Germany would be incompatible with the independence of the Southern States stipulated by, and recorded in the Prague Treaty. Furthermore, Benedetti was repeatedly reminded that the annexation of Luxemburg was the immediate object of the Treaty; that the incorporation of Belgium was to be achieved, if possible; and that the latter project, as well as that of the offensive and defensive alliance, was to be kept absolutely secret.

That the Emperor knew all about Benedetti's draft treaty is demonstrated—as are his views upon another German matter—by one of his letters to Rouher, in which he writes:—"I send you the draft treaty with my own mar-

ginal notes. In addition to it we must verbally require that the fortresses formerly constructed with a purpose hostile to France must, after the dissolution of the German Confederation, no longer appertain to the new German League, but to the States in whose domains they stand; for instance, Luxemburg to France, Mayence and Saarlouis to Prussia, Landau to Bavaria, Rastatt to Baden, and Ulm to Wuertemberg. It seems to me that Prussia has a good deal of trouble with Saxony. Would it not be better that Prussia should annex a Protestant country and indemnify the King of Saxony upon the left bank of the Rhine—a Catholic territory? But all this must be only hinted at confidentially . . . The Luxemburg question will come to light of itself as soon as negotiations shall be opened about it. It is most urgent of all."

In his answer to Lavalette's letter of August 29, Benedetti for the first time expressed a doubt that Prussia was to be trusted in the matter, and remarked that Bismarck appeared to entertain some suspicion that the Emperor intended to utilise these negotiations in order to sow dissension between Prussia and England. "What confidence," he asked "can we repose in negotiators who are capable of such a calculation as this?" He alluded to General von Manteuffel's mission to Petersburg, and observed:—"I fear that M. de Bismarck has received assurances from other quarters which enable him to dispense with troubling himself about us. Prussia requires—as he is supposed to have told the King—an alliance with a Great Power; and if she rejects that of France it is because she has made sure of another, or is on the way to do so." In order to await an *éclaircissement*, the Ambassador went for a fortnight to Karlsbad. Whilst he was away, the Prussian Minister-President also went on a journey, and did not return until December, so that

Benedetti's draft treaty remained undiscussed during the interval.

Meanwhile Drouyn de l'Huys—whom the Emperor had disavowed in his letter to Rouher and elsewhere—resigned office (September 2); and Lavalette issued a Circular (September 16) to France's diplomatic agents abroad, expressing "the Emperor's views upon recent events in Germany, and explaining the motives of his policy." This document overflowed with statesmanlike sagacity, moderation, love of peace, benevolence and agreeable hopes; the Emperor, who unquestionably inspired its tone and ideas, declared himself quite extraordinarily satisfied with the results of the events in question. If one could only have put faith in his fine words! e.g. "France cannot practise an ambiguous policy. If she be affected in her interests or power by the important changes taking place in Germany, she must say so openly, and take the necessary measures to ensure her safety. If she lose nothing by these changes, she must admit that fact with equal frankness . . . . What do we see in the past? After 1815 the Holy Alliance united all the peoples of Europe, from the Ural to the Rhine, against France. The German Confederation, with Prussia and Austria, comprised a population of eighty millions; it extended from Luxemburg to Trieste, from the Baltic to Trent, and surrounded us with an iron girdle of five Federal fortresses; our strategical position was fettered by the most ingenious grouping of territories. The least difficulty that might occur between ourselves and Holland or Prussia on the Moselle, Germany on the Rhine, or Austria in the Tyrol, brought the whole collective might of the Confederation down upon us at once. Austrian Germany, impregnable on the Etsch, might be carried forward to the Alps at any opportune moment. Prussian Germany had an *avant-garde*

of those second-class States which were chronically agitated by the desire for political transformation and ever ready to regard France as the enemy of their being and endeavours. With the exception of Spain, no possible alliance was open to us throughout the whole Continent . . . Looking to the future of Europe, as recently re-arranged—what guarantee does it offer to France and to universal peace? The coalition of the three Northern Powers is broken up. The new principle governing Europe is that of liberty of alliance. All the Great Powers have fully recovered their independence and can mould their destinies as they please. ' Prussia, augmented and emancipated from any kind of solidarity, ensures the independence of Germany. In this, France need not see any shadow cast over herself. ' Proud of her admirable unity and indestructible nationality, she cannot oppose or condemn the work of fusion going on in Germany, or subordinate to feelings of jealousy the principles of nationality which she professes and represents. If German national feeling is satisfied, its agitation will subside, its enmities will be extinguished. In imitating France it takes a step nearer to us, not farther from us . . . If Austria, freed from her Italian and German liabilities, no longer wastes her strength in fruitless rivalry, but concentrates it in Eastern Europe, she still constitutes a Power of five and thirty millions, parted from France neither by animosity nor interest. Through what strange reaction of the past upon the future should public opinion recognise adversaries, instead of allies, in those nations which—enfranchised from a past inimical to us—are summoned to new life, are guided by principles which are ours as well as theirs, and are inspired by ideas of progress, with which modern society is peacefully at one? An irresistible force prompts the peoples to gather together in massive conglomerations, causing petty States

to dissolve and vanish . . . The Emperor does not believe that the greatness of a country is dependent upon the debility of the peoples that surround it; in his opinion true equilibrium is to be found in the gratified wishes of European races. If these views be equitable and correct, the Emperor has done well to accept the rôle of a mediator, *non sine gloriâ*, to prevent useless and distressing bloodshed; to inculcate moderation in the victor; to mitigate the consequences of defeat by friendly intervention; and, in spite of all obstacles, to effect the restoration of peace. The Imperial Government has for a long time past put in practice its principles with relation to territorial aggrandisement. It understands—and has always understood—that annexations dictated by necessity should only connect with a realm populations akin to its own in manners and national feeling. . . France could only desire such territorial increase as should in no way affect her vigorous internal cohesiveness; but she must ever aim at her political and moral aggrandisement by making her influence useful to the main interests of civilisation. Nevertheless a justifiable sentiment prompts the agitation that thrills the country; a feeling we are bound to recognise and to direct into the proper groove. The successes of the late war teach us a serious lesson, which has fortunately not impinged upon our military honour; they show us the necessity of perfecting our army organisation without delay, so that we may be enabled to defend our territories. On the whole the horizon seems to be clear of menacing possibilities; dangerous problems, which had to be solved because they could not be got rid of, oppressed the spirits of the peoples; they might have forced themselves upon us in still more troublous times; they have found their natural solution without causing convulsions of too terrible a nature, and without the perilous

co-operation of revolutionary passions. A peace that rests upon such firm foundations will prove a lasting one." Yet the "perfectation" of the French military organisation was pronounced imperatively necessary!

The French Minister, Rouher, addressed the Legislative Body (March 18, 1867) in a similar sense when Thiers denounced the policy of the Government, declaring that, "France, in 1866, ought to have threatened the assailant of the German Confederation with war," and that "in the actual situation of affairs two courses were open to France; the first—a dangerous one—was to side with the ambitious (Prussia and Italy); the second, to place herself at the head of threatened interests, which would ensure peace." Napoleon's most trusted councillor admitted quite frankly in his speech that the victory of Koeniggraetz had alarmed "the highest circles" in Paris. "The 3rd of July," he said, "was a momentous day. In presence of that unexpected and improbable event the hearts of all the members of this Government were filled with patriotic anxiety."

On that very day the Luxemburg question—which Napoleon was then busy negotiating secretly with the King of the Netherlands—cropped up in the Parliament of the North German Confederation. On this occasion the Chancellor spoke as follows upon Luxemburg's position since the dissolution of the old Bund and formation of the new one:—"With respect to Luxemburg no wish has been expressed to us by the Sovereign of that country, its government or population, that the Duchy should join the North German Confederation. On our part we have neither asserted that Luxemburg or Limburg legally belong to Germany, nor have we declared that they do not. We cannot exercise compulsion or even constraint upon Sove-

reigns who do not choose to join the Confederation." In reply to Deputy von Carlowitz he observed:—"I fancy that the previous speaker has contradicted himself by asserting that one of the chief weaknesses of the former Bund was the circumstance that Sovereigns were members of it who owned large realms beyond its territorial limits, and by now recommending that the King of the Netherlands should be induced, as Grand-Duke of Luxemburg, to join the actual Bund, or, in default of his so doing, that we should deprive him of that Duchy, to which he has every imaginable right . . . If the previous speaker can manage to induce the Grand-Duke to come into the North German Confederation, he will be able to say that he has called an European question into existence; what more, Time alone could show."

Meanwhile Napoleon and the King of the Netherlands had come to terms about the sale of Luxemburg to the former; and the only question remaining unanswered was "How will they take it in Berlin?" On March 21 the French Minister, Moustier, wrote to the French Envoy at the Hague that the views of both Courts daily approached nearer and nearer to unanimity, and that new proofs of the population's desire to become united with France reached Paris continually. "We believe," he continued, "that the Grand Duke possesses the unrestricted right to dispose of Luxemburg, with the consent of its inhabitants, and that we have as indisputable a right to acquire that country under similar conditions. But we, as well as the King of the Netherlands, entertain the sincere wish to maintain good relations with the Court of Berlin; and it is impossible not to take into account the presence of a Prussian garrison, although no longer justified by any legal right . . . We have no objection to the Cabinet of Berlin being made ac-

quainted with these negotiations, but wish that the information may reach it through ourselves. Careful consideration of the question will, we hope, convince the King that, despite his natural desire to take the initiative in this confidential communication, it is necessary to leave to us the exclusive management of and responsibility for such a step. We will at once open confidential negotiations with Prussia in the matter, which cannot lead to any unpleasant result, it being our object to make this question a vehicle of *rapprochement*, not a cause of quarrel . . . I need not remind you that the persons admitted to this exchange of ideas must observe absolute silence with respect to it."

On March 28 the Prince of Orange telegraphed to the Emperor Napoleon that the King of the Netherlands consented to cede Luxemburg to France, and requested him (Napoleon) to come to an understanding with Prussia. Two days later Moustier expressed his regret to the French Envoy at the Hague that his Dutch colleague at Berlin had officially broached the affair to the Prussian Government without France's knowledge or co-operation. The next day Benedetti informed his chief in Paris that the Luxemburg business had created an excitement throughout Germany which appeared to agitate Bismarck considerably. The Chancellor had been apprised that the Liberals intended to interpellate him upon the matter, and therefore deemed it expedient that the conclusion of the compact between France and Holland should be postponed. On April 1 Benedetti received a telegram from Moustier, to this effect. "The new state of German affairs will obtain all the earlier recognition if the new Confederation conscientiously confines itself within the limits of its jurisdiction. M. de Bismarck's language has always led us to believe that he regarded matters from this point of view. The Minister-

President has surely influence and courage enough to indicate to German patriotism the boundaries within which it must contain itself in order not to wound the patriotism of other peoples."

On the same day Bennigsen asked the Chancellor in Parliament whether the daily multiplying rumours of negotiations between the French and Dutch Governments anent the cession of Luxemburg were founded on fact, and whether the Prussian Government were in a position to assure the Reichstag that it was resolved, in concord with its Confederates, to permanently ensure the connection of that ancient German province with the collective Fatherland (and in particular to vindicate the Prussian right of garrisoning the Fortress of Luxemburg) against any danger.

Bismarck replied as follows :—" After the dissolution of the Bund the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg and its Grand Duke enjoyed a sovereignty of the same European character as that of the Netherlands and their King. The great majority of the former Confederates utilised their liberty forthwith, as did Prussia, to form a new League for mutual support and protection of national interests. The Grand Duchy of Luxemburg did not think fit to follow their example. Through the organs of which we could dispose within the Duchy and upon its frontiers we learnt that a decided disinclination to join the North German Confederation was manifested by all classes of the population. In the higher—especially in the highest—circles" (this refers to the Queen of Holland, a Wuertemburg princess, who was an eager opponent of Prussia and Prussian policy, as her correspondence with Napoleon shows) " it was attributable to a strongly pronounced dislike of Prussia and her successes; in the lower strata of society, to a repugnance to those burdens which are inevitably imposed upon a people

by a serious system of National Defence. The sentiments of the Luxemburg Government found expression in a despatch addressed to us last October, endeavouring to prove to us that we had no right to maintain a garrison in Luxemburg. The Prussian Government and its Confederates were compelled to ask themselves whether, under these circumstances, it would be expedient to exercise influence, or even pressure, in the direction of inducing the Grand Duchy—which belongs to the Customs' Union—to join the North German Confederation as well. This government, after due reflection, answered. that question in the negative, regarding it as a doubtful advantage to own as a member of so intimate a League the Grand Duke of Luxemburg, who—as King of the Netherlands—had his centre of gravity and chief interests outside the Bund. . . . This Government further considered that the treatment of this question required a high degree of prudence, by reason of Luxemburg's geographical position and peculiar circumstances. No more than justice has been rendered to Prussian policy by the declaration, made from an exalted quarter" (Moustier's telegram to Benedetti), "that it seeks to take account of the French nation's susceptibilities—naturally as far as is consistent with its own honour. This Government is and has been prompted to pursue that policy by its just appreciation of the importance which friendly relations to a mighty neighbouring people cannot but possess for the peaceful development of the German question. . . . We have no reason to believe that an absolute decision has been arrived at with respect to the future destiny of the Grand Duchy; we cannot allege the contrary with certainty; nor can we know whether or not, if such a decision have not been yet arrived at, it be on the point of completion. The only incidents which have enabled the Government to

take official cognizance of this matter are the following. A few days ago His Majesty the King of the Netherlands verbally asked the Prussian Envoy at the Hague to inform him what the Prussian Government would have to say if he (the King) were to part with his sovereignty in the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg. Count Perponcher was instructed by us to reply that this Government and its Confederates were in no way called upon to offer an opinion upon that question; that they must regard His Majesty as responsible for his own actions: and that the Prussian Government, before expressing its views, must ascertain those of its Confederates of the co-signatories of the 1839 Treaties, and of German public opinion, at present fitly represented by this exalted Assembly. The second incident was that the Dutch Government, through its Envoy here, offered us its friendly services in the negotiations it assumed were about to take place between Prussia and France with respect to the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg. To this offer we replied that we were not in a position to avail ourselves of the services in question, because no negotiations of that kind were on hand." Referring to the second part of the interpellation, the Chancellor said:—"It is couched in language highly appropriate to a Parliament inspired by national feeling—not in the terms employed by diplomacy, for the discussion of international relations, when these latter are to be maintained upon a peaceful footing. You cannot expect me to state publicly—as might be permissible to a representative of the people—at this moment what the views and resolves of the Government and its Confederates are in this case or that. The Confederate Governments are of opinion that no foreign Power will interfere with the indisputable rights of German States and German populations; they hope to be able to vindicate and protect those rights by

peaceful negotiations, without prejudicing the friendly relations which Germany has hitherto entertained with its neighbours."

There could be no question in Berlin of consenting to the cession of Luxemburg to France, in view of the general excitement aroused in Germany by that project. Impressed by the Fatherland's determined attitude, and mindful of the treaty concluded on March 19 with the South-German States by Bismarck (ensuring their support to the North German Confederation against France), Napoleon, who was not prepared to risk a war against United Germany, swiftly drew in his horns. On April 8 he made Moustier state in the Corps Législatif that the Emperor of the French and the King of the Netherlands had only "exchanged ideas" upon the Luxemburg question, and that their discussions "had not yet assumed an official character." The French Minister continued:—"True to the principles which have ever guided our policy, we never regarded the acquisition of this territory as possible, save under three conditions, viz.: the free consent of the Grand Duke, full consideration for the interests of the Great Powers, and the wish of the population, expressed by universal suffrage. We therefore propose (in concord with the other European Cabinets) to examine the clauses of the 1839 treaty, and shall proceed to do so in the most conciliatory spirit."

Although Napoleon renounced the annexation of the Grand-Duchy, he still demanded the withdrawal of the Prussian garrison from the fortress of Luxemburg, on the ground that "circumstances in Germany had entirely changed. The old Confederation's objects were purely defensive; its machinery was complicated, its action slow. Its forces were now concentrated in the hands of Prussia, and Luxemburg—held by a Prussian garrison—would no

longer be a mere position of defence for Germany, but of offence against France." Bismarck declined to accede to this demand of the Emperor, declaring that Prussia (in the actual state of German affairs) could not consent to any separation whatsoever of Luxemburg from Germany, or to the evacuation of the fortress. In reply, Moustier stated—through the representatives of France in London, Vienna, Florence, and Petersburg—that France sought for no territorial aggrandisement, but only to safeguard her frontiers, and therefore felt justified in anticipating that Prussia would allow none but friendly sentiments to govern her relations to France and would recognise the necessities of the latter's defensive position; *ergo*, that she would not insist upon continuing to garrison Luxemburg. France wished to establish amicable relations with Germany, and was therefore far from intending to make a *casus belli* of Prussia's refusal. The despatch concluded with these words:—"As our only anxiety is to ensure the safety of our frontiers, we will not beforehand reject any combination that may afford us sufficient guarantees in that direction." Lord Stanley telegraphed to the British Envoy in Berlin (April 17) that the British Government declined to pronounce judgment upon the question pending between Prussia and France; but, taking into account France's maritime preponderance, advised Prussia to give way. Beust proposed that Luxemburg should either be left in possession of the King of the Netherlands or handed over to Belgium, which, in return, should cede a portion of its territory to France; in either case the Prussians should evacuate the fortress. Bismarck favoured the second alternative; he wished to see Luxemburg re-united to Belgium. "By so doing," he observed to us in Versailles (January 25, 1871) "we should have amalgamated it with a country for the neutrality of

which, as was then believed, England would have taken action; moreover, we should have strengthened the German element in Belgium (the Flemings) against the Fransquillons, and gained a good frontier to boot. But I found no support in the Council." Public opinion in Germany was also unfavourable to this transaction; so the *status quo* was adhered to. Belgium would not cede anything to France; France wanted nothing from Belgium; so Beust's suggestion came to nothing. The British Cabinet recommended one of the three following courses:—1. Unreserved transfer of the fortress of Luxemburg to the King of the Netherlands. 2. Transfer of the same to the same after razing the fortifications. 3. Transfer of the same to Belgium, with or without ceding the Luxemburg Duchy to Belgium. Russia recommended a Conference for the settlement of the question upon the bases of the Grand Duchy's neutrality, to be guaranteed by the Great Powers; and Bismarck agreed to this, answering the British enquiry whether or not he were prepared to declare beforehand that Germany would forego her actual demands, if required to do so by the Conference (a question also addressed to France) that Prussia could not pledge herself to anything by anticipation. After the French Government, however, had declared that it would send a representative to a Conference and comply with the latter's decisions—provided it should be beforehand privately and confidentially settled that Luxemburg should be evacuated by the Prussians—the Chancellor expressed his willingness to do the like, observing that Prussia would consent to evacuate and raze the fortress, should that be the Conference's desire, and should the Conference at the same time accord a guarantee for the neutrality of all Luxemburg, similar to that securing the neutrality of Belgium. These conditions were accepted by all the Great

Powers as a basis for the transactions of the Conference, which subsequently adopted them as decisions. Luxemburg remained so far connected with Germany that it did not cease to be a member of the Customs' Union; and in 1872 Bismarck took care to arrange by treaty that the government of the German Empire should get the administration of all the Grand Duchy's railways into its own hands, thus binding it still more closely to Germany. He had not chosen to fight over the question, because (as he said in the Reichstag on September 24, 1867) "our independence was not menaced by it, nor was any unquestionable right disputed." War was honourably avoided, and Prussia's renunciation of her right of garrison in Luxemburg was fully balanced by the Powers' guarantee of that Duchy's neutrality.

The Luxemburg question seemed to have vanished for ever, when France again began to tout most energetically for an alliance with Prussia, having conquest for its object. Benedetti, as we have seen, had had no opportunity during the year 1866 of submitting to the German Chancellor the draft treaty which he had prepared in conformity with instructions brought to him by Chauvy, and had subsequently laid before the French Emperor. In the spring of 1867 he brought it to the Foreign Office in Berlin, discussed it with Bismarck, and committed the imprudence of leaving the original draft (written by himself upon official paper of the French Embassy) in the hands of the Chancellor. It ran as follows:—

"Their Majesties the King of Prussia and Emperor of the French, deeming it desirable to tighten the bonds of friendship that connect them, and to strengthen the relations of good neighbourship happily existing between their respective countries; convinced, moreover, that in order to attain this end, and to guarantee the maintenance of

universal peace, it is incumbent upon them to come to an understanding upon questions affecting their future relations, have resolved to conclude a Treaty with that object, and have therefore nominated —— and —— as their Plenipotentiaries, who have agreed upon the following articles:—Art. 1. The Emperor of the French admits and recognises the acquisitions made by Prussia during her recent war with Austria and the latter's Allies, as well as the creation of a confederation in North Germany, to the maintenance of which he pledges himself to lend his support." (When this article was read to him Bismarck at once observed to the Ambassador that its concluding sentence presupposed France's right to interfere in Germany's internal affairs—a right which he could not allow of, even in a secret document—whereupon Benedetti set a pencil mark against the sentence)." Article 11. His Majesty the King of Prussia promises to facilitate the acquisition of Luxemburg by France." (France having but just publicly renounced her pretensions thereto!) "To this end the Prussian Monarch will open negotiations with the King of the Netherlands in order to induce the latter to cede his sovereign rights in the Grand Duchy to the Emperor of the French against an adequate indemnity, or otherwise. In order to facilitate this transaction the Emperor, on his part, engages to take upon himself the pecuniary burdens it may entail. Article 3. The Emperor of the French will not oppose a Federal Union of the Northern Confederation with the Southern States of Germany—Austria excepted—and this Union may be based upon a common Parliament, safeguarding equitably, however, the Sovereignty of those States. Article 4. In case the Emperor of the French should be induced by circumstances to occupy Belgium with his troops, or to conquer

that country, the King of Prussia will lend him armed support, and stand by him with all his land and sea forces against any Power that may declare war upon him in that case. Article 5. In order to ensure the complete fulfilment of the foregoing stipulations, their Majesties conclude, by the present treaty, an offensive and defensive alliance, which they solemnly pledge themselves to maintain. Their Majesties, moreover, expressly engage to observe this alliance in every case in which their respective States (the integrity of which they reciprocally guarantee) may be menaced by attack; holding themselves bound, under such circumstances, to take (without hesitation or refusal upon any pretext whatsoever) the military measures dictated by their common interest, in conformity with the above clauses and dispositions."

In his book 'Ma Mission en Prusse,' Benedetti seeks to deny this, saying:—"It will be remembered that on August 5, 1866, I submitted to M. de Bismarck the project of a treaty concerning Mainz and the left bank of the Upper Rhine; and I need not say that M. Rouher referred to this communication in the second part of his letter of the 6th.* The project proves (a fact which it is desirable to establish in view of M. de Bismarck's allegations) that nobody in Paris even dreamt of making Belgium serve as

* It ran as follows:—"I pointed out to Herr von der Goltz that this question (of France's immediate official recognition of the Prussian annexations) appeared to me closely connected with that of the rectification of our frontiers, and that he would probably be instructed to deal with them both simultaneously. My prevision was correct; yesterday the Prussian Envoy communicated to me the reply of our colleague, which explains that Benedetti has spoken to M. de Bismarck in the above sense, and deems it expedient to await an answer to his proposals before proceeding to further negotiations. Herr von der Goltz finds our demands justified in principle."

the compensation required by France and designated as her just due by the Prussian Envoy himself." When the ex-Ambassador published his statement he was unaware that certain secret papers, distinctly contradicting it, had fallen into the hands of the Prussian troops during the war. With these documents the Prussian Foreign Office replied (October 29, 1871) as follows to Benedetti's *démenti*:—

"Benedetti attempts to mix up two phases of the dilatory negotiations carried on with him by the Prussian Minister-President throughout several years. He amalgamates his demand for a cession of German territory with Mayence—which he addressed to the Minister-President on the 5th and 7th of August, 1866—with his subsequent demand for Belgium, and strives to show that the letters discovered in the Tuileries and since published have reference to the former exaction, which, however, was finally disposed of by the Emperor's letter to the Marquis de Lavalette, quoted by Benedetti at p. 181 of his book. That both phases were quite distinct from one another, even from his point of view, is manifest from his own official reports, which are in the hands of the German Foreign Office. When Benedetti asserts (p. 185) that Herr von Bismarck is mistaken in saying that the negotiations about Belgium were carried on in 1867, whereas they took place in 1866, all that can be observed is that the French Ambassador renewed in 1867 (limiting them to the question of Belgium) negotiations that, having completely failed with respect to Luxemburg, had been broken off in 1866; and which, as a matter of fact, had only been carried on at all by the Prussian Minister-President with a view to postponing a French attack upon Prussia."

What Bismarck thought about the Belgian question, when he regarded it from Napoleon's point of view, may be

gathered from some remarks he made to the Duke of Bauffremont (1867) in the Tuileries garden, upon which remarks he subsequently enlarged to us at Versailles (November 5, 1870). They were to the effect that the Emperor had not understood his advantages in 1866, when he might have done a good business, although not upon German soil. The Versailles commentary ran thus:—"In the summer of 1866 Napoleon had not the pluck to do what was the right thing from his point of view. He ought —well, he ought to have taken possession of the subject of Benedetti's proposal, when we were marching against the Austrians, and have held it in pawn for whatever might happen. At that time we could not stop him, and it was not likely that England would attack him—at least he might have waited to see. If we proved victorious he ought to have tried to work with us, back to back, and to encourage us to commit excesses. But he is a Tiefenbacher, and always will be."

Indications are not wanting that the endeavours of the French (failures up to spring of 1867) to obtain compensation for the alleged loss of power caused to them by Prussia's increase of power in 1866, were renewed in the shape of negotiations with Bismarck. Paris, at any rate, clung to its delusions, which were kept up by the fact that the German Chancellor, in all confidential discussions of the subject, committed himself to no positive declarations, either in the affirmative or negative, but expressed himself in general terms, hoping to achieve his ends by peaceful means.

His motives for this pursuing "a dilatory policy" have already been pointed out. Let him characterise them himself. In his circular of July 29, 1870, he said, "I opined that the annihilation of France's hopes would

endanger the peace which it was the interest of Germany and Europe to preserve. The various phases of French vexation and bellicoseness which we passed through from 1866 to 1869 coincided pretty exactly with the degrees of inclination or disinclination for negotiations of this kind which the French agent believed he detected in my behaviour. When the Belgian Railway dispute was terminating in March, 1868, Prince Napoleon (who was acquainted with the negotiations in question) observed to me that, should France occupy Belgium, "nous trouverions bien notre Belgique ailleurs," by which he perhaps meant South Germany, but still more probably Holland. It had been mentioned to me on previous occasions (during the Crimean War) that France would seek her share of war-booty immediately upon her own frontiers, not in the far East. I am under the impression that nothing short of the definitive conviction that France could not possibly achieve any territorial aggrandisement by our aid induced the Emperor to make up his mind that he would effect that object in defiance of us. I did not share the opinion of those politicians who advised me not to do all I could to avoid war with France, because it was inevitable. Nobody can exactly foresee the purposes of Divine Providence in the future; and I regard even a victorious war as an evil from which statesmanship should strive to preserve nations. I could not exclude from my calculations the possibility that chances might accrue in France's constitution and policy which might avert the necessity of war from two great neighbour-races—a hope in connection with which every postponement of a rupture was so much to the good."

To these concluding sentences a few commentaries may be added which the author of this book has gathered during his personal intercourse with the Chancellor. After the

debate in the Reichstag upon Baden's accession to the North German Confederation (February 23, 1870) my chief instructed me to explain his attitude towards the question in the public press, referring to the speech in which he had endeavoured to throw light upon the nature of the matter to Lasker and other importunate persons. "I would beg you," he said, "to give prominence to the circumstance that the National-Liberal journals have either not comprehended my chief purposes or have purposely ignored them. The incorporation of Baden would exercise pressure upon the King of Bavaria, and therefore be dangerous; besides, we have to consider the actual position of France, her Constitutional development, which has been in every way furthered from Berlin, and, as it means peace for us, must not be exposed to a spring-frost. The Arcadians are only waiting for an event in Germany. Napoleon is all right up to now, but weathercocky. We could fight France and beat her; but that would lead to four or five other wars, and would therefore be a folly—if not a crime—when we can get what we want by peaceful means. Bellicose or revolutionary situations may crop up in France when metal that is hard now shall have become softer. There was a movement forward in my speech, which the good folks did not notice, viz., the hint that, under certain circumstances, we might not adopt the Austrian view—that South Germany may not be taken into the Northern Confederation—or the French one, extending that prohibition to any and every single southern State. That was a feeler. I shall only know what to do further when I shall have heard how they have taken the hint in Vienna and Paris."

A few days later, by his order and at his dictation, I wrote a "correspondence" for a Rhenish paper, purporting to emanate from a Parisian Liberal, and to express his views

of the German question and of the struggle between the National-Liberals and the Chancellor. The second part of this article, reproducing the Chancellor's utterances verbally, ran as follows :—"Whosoever, here in Paris, has been in a position to observe with what difficulty the actual Constitutional phase has been attained, what difficulties it has to overcome in order to achieve a healthy growth, how mighty are the influences which are only awaiting any pretext for smothering the babe in its cradle, will regard the horizon abroad with anxiety, and feel his hopes of a certain and tranquil development of the new system depressed by every black spot thereon. The urgent desire of every sincere supporter of Constitutionalism in France may be thus summed up; let us have no diversion abroad just now, no new phenomenon cropping up in the foreign political horizon which may be turned to account, not as a real motive, but as a pretext for howling down the youthful existence of Constitutionalism in France, or for turning public attention to foreign complications. The Emperor, as we believe, is in earnest with his experiment, but the people in his immediate *entourage*, and the tools he uses—who are all greedily yearning for some event that may give them a chance of diverting the Emperor from a groove they hold in abomination—are very numerous, and, in virtue of the roots they have struck into his eighteen years' past, much more powerful than people fancy abroad. Whosoever has Constitutional development at heart can only wish just now most earnestly that not the least change may accrue in the foreign relations of France which may in any way lead to the reaction wished for by the opponents of any and every Constitution in France."

The Chancellor, therefore, desired that Germany's friendly relations to France should be maintained and consolidated

by promoting and strengthening the new French Constitutional *régime*, which could not but render warlike experiments less easy and probable than that of Absolutism. Possibly he hoped that Liberalism would advance by strides to Parliamentarism, Revolution and the Republic, which would be bound to weaken France at home, and make it impossible for her to contract alliances with Monarchical Governments abroad. It was upon this account that, on the one hand and for the time being, he abstained from a further *rapprochement* to Southern Germany, and on the other observed a hesitant and postponing policy towards the recurrent touting of the Tuileries Cabinet for an alliance with Germany, having for its object the territorial aggrandisement of France through the annexation of Belgium, or some other extra-German territory. Another of his motives for this "dilatory policy," was his opinion that New Germany did not then seem quite strong enough to fight France with the certainty of success. "I remember," he said to us one evening at Versailles, "when I was at the Paris Exhibition of 1867, I thought to myself 'how would it have been by now, if we had fought out the Luxemburg quarrel? Should I be in Paris, or the French in Berlin?' We were not nearly as strong then as we are now. The Hanoverians and Hessians of that day could not have supplied us with so many good soldiers as to-day. As for the Schleswig-Holsteiner—who have lately been fighting like lions—they had no army at all. The Saxon army was broken up and had to be entirely reconstructed. And there was but little to be expected from the South-Germans. What splendid fellows the Wuertemberger are now, quite magnificent!—but in 1866 no soldier could help laughing at them, as they marched into Frankfort, like a civic guard. Nor was all well with the Baden forces; the Grand Duke

has done a great deal for them since then. Doubtless public opinion throughout Germany was with us, if we had chosen to make war about Luxemburg. But that would not have made up for all these shortcomings."

In 1870 this scruple was effaced: Germany was armed to the teeth, and the Chancellor, moreover, had come to the conclusion that the Constitutional *régime* in France, far from preventing war, would not even postpone it for any length of time. The Arcadians wished for it; the Ultramontanists, with the Empress at their head, loudly clamoured for it. France waxed visibly stronger, in military respects, and was arranging alliances. If delay had been hopeful up to that time, it then became dangerous; consequently the leading statesman found it necessary to hasten the inevitable, instead of endeavouring any longer to postpone a crisis. In the interest of Germany and Europe he was compelled to devise some method of provoking the French ere they should be completely ready for the fray. It was high time to make sure of being beforehand with them in attack, and to avert,—if possible, for ever—the dangers with which their illwill and covetousness threatened their eastern neighbour. The means to effect this salutary end were supplied, in the first place, by their irritability, and supplemented by their extravagant conceit, imperfect acquaintance with their adversary's resources and consequent presumption.

Let us look a little closer into the situation. Soon after the Luxemburg quarrel had been hushed up the French Government thought fit to meddle in the negotiations pending between Prussia and Denmark respecting Article 5 of the Prague Treaty. Bismarck disposed of this interference by intimating that Prussia had concluded peace with Austria at Prague, and with Austria only; consequently

that she had no need to discuss the matter with anyone else. The French Government took the hint to keep quiet: but, in order not to incur the displeasure of public opinion in France for so doing, published (July 27) in its official organ a statement to the effect that no "Note" had been handed to the Berlin Cabinet on the Schleswig or any other question; an assertion which was so far correct, that the communication really made by Moustier to von Thile, through the French Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin, was a despatch, which the latter "read aloud." The public, unversed in the gibberish of diplomacy, accepted this tergiversation as a satisfactory assurance. But Napoleon had acquired fresh cause to be dissatisfied with the part which he—once the universally respected mediator and arbitrator of his neighbours' differences—found himself called to play in connection with the German Chancellor. At every minute (whenever German interests were concerned) the latter, always with studious politeness, crossed the plans of the importunate Emperor, who—discovering too late what sort of man he had to do with—exclaimed about that time:—"M. de Bismarck has hoodwinked me; a French Emperor cannot allow himself to be hoodwinked!" That being his state of feeling, he prepared, by constructing a powerful army, to take his revenge. Marshal Niel was entrusted with that task, and felt himself justified, as early as December, 1867 (during the debate upon the new Military Law in the Corps Législatif), in referring to the "advanced" degree of efficiency which the army had attained under his Ministry. Napoleon complacently announced in his Speech from the Throne on January 18, 1869, that "the Military Law, and the supplies voted by your patriotism, have strengthened the confidence of the country, which is now proudly conscious that it is in a

position to encounter whatever may betide. . . Our perfect armaments (Chassepots and mitrailleuses), our replete arsenals and magazines, our trained reserves, our mobile National Guard, our reconstructed fleet and our powerful fortresses impart an imperative necessary development to our might. The permanent object of my endeavours is attained; our military resources will henceforth be adequate to their mission in the world." Napoleon had also kept in view alliances with foreign powers. His visit to the Emperor Francis Joseph at Salzburg (18–23 August, 1867), was undertaken with this object; although according to Moustier's Circular of the 25th, "It had been solely inspired by the wish to give a proof of heartfelt sympathy to the Imperial Family of Austria, recently stricken with so terrible a misfortune" (the execution of the Archduke Maximilian, in Mexico); and Bismarck, in his Circular Despatch, appeared to rejoice over this declaration, which gave him an opportunity to point out that the reception accorded throughout Germany to the intelligence that the German question had been discussed at Salzburg 'had demonstrated anew how ill German national feeling could endure the mere notion that the development of the Fatherland's affairs should be carried on under the tutelage of foreign interference, or of any considerations other than those imposed by Germany's national interests." Moustier however, admitted that the two monarchs "had communicated their views to one another and exchanged ideas upon questions of general interest." It was patent that those ideas were in no way suggested by sympathy for Prussian policy.

The following year (as Prince Napoleon stated in the April number of the 'Revue des Deux Mondes,' for 1878) Napoleon and Victor Emmanuel commenced secret nego-

tiations for an Alliance. Count Beust knew of this, and was kept thoroughly *au courant* of all that took place by Prince Metternich, acting "not only as Austrian Ambassador, but as a person in the confidence of the Tuileries." A draft treaty was the result, contracting a Franco-Austro alliance, hostile to Prussia. France's two allies were to commence operations by diplomatic intervention, and, should that prove ineffectual, were to take the field. The Cabinet of Vienna proposed that Prussia should be summoned to pledge herself to strictly observe the state of things established by the Treaty of Prague. Should she refuse, Austria and Italy would avow their alliance with France and proceed to attack Germany. King Victor Emmanuel offered to supply 60,000 men at once, and 40,000 more a few weeks later. Austria's troops were to commence action after those of Italy. The Italians were to cross the Austrian frontier, invade Bavaria and occupy Munich; the Austrians were to take up a position in Bohemia and thence effect a junction with the Italian army. As Italy exacted the evacuation of Rome by the French as the price of her co-operation, and was backed up by Austria in so doing, whilst Napoleon—influenced by the bigoted Empress and her Jesuit advisers—declined to agree to that stipulation, the alliance was not definitively concluded. However, autograph letters upon the matter had passed between Napoleon and Francis Joseph, on the one hand, and Victor Emmanuel and Napoleon on the other, the contents of which led the Emperor of the French to believe that the alliances he desired to effect would encounter no obstacles so soon as France should declare war against Prussia, or, at least, should gain her first victory. The French Cabinet also believed that it could count upon the South German States, whose Government, truly, were bound to North

Germany by treaties of alliance; but Napoleon thought he saw his way to bringing about a rupture of those bonds.

A large proportion of the population in Bavaria disliked Prussia, chiefly for confessional reasons; in Wuertemberg the roast was ruled by unpatriotic democrats who hated and feared Prussian "militarism;" in Hesse the majority of the people was favourable to union with Prussia and her North German Confederates, but the Grand Duke and his Minister Dalwigk made no secret of their sympathy for France; finally, in Baden, Government and people were alike thoroughly German in feeling, but they had been no less so in 1866, and yet had been compelled by the geographical position of their country, to take part against the champions of the German cause. The hope remained unfulfilled that the German Customs' Parliament (which assembled for the first time on April 27, 1868) would further an union between North and South.

Keeping these facts in view, the German Chancellor continued to avoid taking any step which might have justified France in feeling herself insulted or injured. In the Union question especially, he proceeded with extreme caution and reserve. Without omitting anything which might advance a *rapprochement* on the part of his Southern fellow-countrymen, he refrained in every respect from putting pressure on them, or overstepping the limits of the treaties concluded with them. But he let every one know in the plainest terms that his behaviour was not dictated by fear of any foreign Power.

In the spring of 1870 the St. Gothard Railway question caused great excitement in France. It was proposed to connect Germany and Italy by a line which should neither touch French nor Austrian territory, and that the North German

Confederation should contribute 10,000,000f. to its cost. Switzerland had long hesitated between the St. Gothard and the Spluegen; but when Bismarck declared in favour of the former, as well as Italy and Baden, the Helvetians also adopted it. The enterprise encountered some difficulties in the Reichstag, but Bismarck removed them by his speech of May 26, setting forth the political advantages of the railway as follows:—"The Confederate Governments must surely be convinced that our political interests render it desirable to establish a line of communication between Germany and Italy, which shall be exclusively dependent upon a neutral country, instead of being in the hands of any great European Power. The considerations must have been of unusual weight that have moved this Government to so extraordinary—I may say unprecedented—a proceeding as that of asking you to undertake a considerable pecuniary outlay for a railway outside the frontier, not only of the Northern Confederation but of Germany itself. . . . It is a matter of paramount interest to us to possess a means of direct communication with Italy, a country friendly to us, and, as we believe, likely to remain so." These words afforded food for reflection in Paris, and the French Government was questioned upon the subject on June 9 in the Corps Législatif. The new Foreign Minister, Duc de Gramont, asked for time to consider his reply. He and the Emperor appear to have hesitated for a few days whether or not they should make the treaty between North Germany, Italy, and Switzerland a pretext for war, and to have come to the conclusion that Europe would regard such a proceeding as unjustifiable. Gramont, therefore, informed the Assembly on June 20 that France was not called upon to interfere in the matter. Soon afterwards, however, he found in Spain what he had vainly sought for

in Switzerland; and availed himself of his discovery with equal precipitancy and clumsiness.

As early as July, 1869, the notion (it was originally Salazar's) of filling the ex-Queen of Spain's throne with Leopold, Hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern, had been discussed in Madrid; and Benedetti had spoken on the subject in Berlin, first to the Secretary of State, Von Thile (March 51) and then to Bismarck himself (May 11), who pointed out to him the critical position in which the Prince would place himself by consenting to such a project, expressed the confident expectation that the King as well as the Hereditary Prince's father would advise him not to run any such risk, and added that Prince Frederic Charles might perhaps be disposed to undertake the adventure, did not religious obstacles—his necessary conversion to Roman Catholicism—stand in his way. During the following autumn Prince Leopold was confidentially sounded on the part of Spain as to his disposition to accept the Iberian crown; and he declined it. Fresh negotiations with him were opened in June 1870; this time he accepted, and on July 3 the European Courts were telegraphically apprised of that fact. King William visited Czar Alexander at Ems that very day, accompanied by Bismarck, the Czar also having his Berlin Ambassador with him. The inference is plain. The Hereditary Prince's decision produced the effect in Paris that a red rag does upon a bull. On the 4th, by Gramont's order, the French Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin asked Von Thile what was the real state of the case, and was informed that "the Prussian Government knew nothing of the matter, which, as far as it was concerned, did not exist." "He endeavoured," wrote Le Sourd to Gramont, "to put the responsibility of his government out of the question; but Your Excellency will observe that he refrained from a

categorical assurance that the Berlin Cabinet ignored the existence and result of the negotiations." Gramont himself (also on the 4th) requested the Prussian Ambassador in Paris—who was on the point of joining his Sovereign at Ems—to inform the King that France expected him to command Prince Leopold to revoke his acceptance, and would consider his refusal to do so a *casus belli*. On the 5th, Deputy Cochéry (officially instigated) questioned the Foreign Minister upon the Hohenzollern candidature in the Corps Legislatif; and, on the following day, received answer that the "rumour in question" had been confirmed, to which Gramont added: "We do not think that respect for a neighbouring nation's rights obliges us to tolerate that a foreign Power, by seating one of its Princes upon the throne of Charles V., should derange to its own advantage the European balance of power, thereby endangering the interests and honour of France. We hope this eventuality will not be realised; should it, however, come to pass, we shall fulfil our duty without hesitation or weakness, strong in the support of yourselves and the nation." It would have been difficult, one would have thought, to proceed more impetuously or to threaten more insolently. But worse remained behind. King William was to be offered the alternative of yielding to intimidation or entangling Germany in a serious war upon purely dynastic considerations, as the cause of quarrel would certainly be represented. On the 9th, Benedetti, who had thitherto been staying at Wildbad, was sent by Gramont to Ems to demand of His Majesty that he (the King) would restore peace to Europe by commanding Prince Leopold to withdraw from his candidature. The King replied that he had in no way encouraged the Prince to accept the Spanish Crown, nor forbade him to do so, and that he could not compel him to

renounce it; the French had better ask the Madrid Government to give up its project. On the 11th the French Ambassador renewed his demand, and next day a telegram reached Ems announcing that the Prince had revoked his previous consent. This appeared to end the quarrel; but Gramont then (through the Prussian Ambassador in Paris, who had meanwhile returned to his post) required that the King should write an apologetic letter to the Emperor (Baron Werther personally recommended compliance with this demand!) and on the 13th Benedetti had the audacity to further exact from the King that he should expressly approve of the Prince's renunciation and pledge himself, moreover, never to give his consent to a renewal of the Prince's candidature for the Spanish throne.

Throughout the whole transaction the King had done all that was in his power to avert the horrors of war from Germany; but he could not comply with this shameless demand without prejudicing his own honour as well as that of his country. He replied that he neither could nor would undertake any such obligation. Benedetti applied for another audience. The King answered that he could not consent to discuss future guarantees with him again. On the 14th Benedetti saw him for the last time. He was at the railway station a few minutes before the King left for Coblenz, and the latter observed to him upon that occasion that "he had nothing further to impart to him; any negotiations that might be requisite would be conducted by his (the King's) Government." A telegram was despatched from Berlin to the Prussian Envoys at foreign Courts, relating all these occurrences, which were also published in an extra sheet of the *Nord Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*. Next day a Ministerial Cabinet at St. Cloud decided upon war. Gramont and Ollivier stated in the Chambers (July 16) that

the telegram in question was a "Note" injurious to French dignity; and on the 19th Le Sourd delivered the French Declaration of War in Berlin.

At the commencement of this episode Bismarck was at Varzin; but seeing, from the turn matters took on the 9th, that the French were bent upon fighting, he returned to Berlin on the 12th, where he found the telegraphic announcement (transmitted by the French Ambassador in Paris) that Prince Leopold had withdrawn his candidature. This determined him to remain at Berlin, and Count Eulenburg, the Home Minister, went off to Ems in his stead. The news from Paris did not please him; still less so did the telegrams reaching him on the 13th with the intelligence of Gramont's latest demands and Benedetti's proceedings in Ems. He replied to the Ambassador in Paris that the latter must have misunderstood Gramont's verbal communications; that he, the responsible Minister, could not lay such a report before the King for official consideration; and that, if the French Government had such communications to make, it must do so through its Embassy at Berlin. With respect to the occurrences at Ems, the Chancellor received a full report by wire from Privy Councillor Abeken, then in the King's suite, with the Royal permission to publish its text. When this telegram arrived, Counts von Moltke and von Roon were dining with Bismarck, who read Abeken's report aloud to them. Both Generals regarded the situation as still peaceful. The Chancellor observed, that would depend a good deal upon the tone and contents of the publication he had just been authorised to make. In the presence of his two guests he then put together some extracts from the telegram, which were forthwith despatched to all the Prussian Legations abroad, and to the Berlin newspapers in the following form:—

"Telegram from Ems, July 13, 1870. When the intelligence of the Hereditary Prince of Hohenzollern's renunciation was communicated by the Spanish to the French Government, the French Ambassador demanded of His Majesty the King, at Ems, that the latter should authorise him to telegraph to Paris that His Majesty would pledge himself for all time to come never again to give his consent, should the Hohenzollerns hark back to their candidature. Upon this His Majesty refused to receive the French Ambassador again, and sent the aide-de-camp in attendance to tell him that His Majesty had nothing further to communicate to the Ambassador."

Lord Loftus, then English Ambassador in Berlin, congratulated the Chancellor (July 13) on the apparently proximate solution of the crisis. Bismarck informed him that, according to information from Paris, that solution of the Spanish difficulty would not suffice to satisfy the French Government, which was putting forward fresh pretensions, clearly proving that the Spanish Succession question had only been a pretext, and that France's real purpose had been "revenge for Koeniggraetz." The German nation felt itself in every way equal to coping with France; "but," added the Chancellor, "we do not wish for war; we have proved our desire for peace, and shall continue to do so; only, as far as armaments are concerned, we cannot allow the French to get ahead of us. I am positively informed that France has been and is now arming. If this go on, we shall be compelled to ask the French Government for explanations. Moreover, if France do not forthwith assure the European Powers that she considers the question definitively settled and does not intend to put forward any more claims—if she do not withdraw Gramont's threatening language, and give satisfactory assurances, we shall be

obliged to demand them." Loftus concluded his report of this interview with the words:—"It appears to me certain that, in view of German public opinion, Count Bismarck and the Prussian Ministry deem it necessary to take very decided measures for safeguarding the national honour."

Arrived at the turning-point and very apogee of the crisis which had been developing ever since 1866, let us glance backwards for a moment. In his anxiety to establish his dynasty upon the throne of France, Napoleon had unsuccessfully striven to obtain German territory on the left bank of the Rhine, to bring about the cession of Luxemburg, and finally to effect the conquest of Belgium, endeavouring repeatedly to secure Prussia's friendship and support in the fulfilment of his projects. Bismarck had never held out any distinct hopes to him, nor conclusively refused to acquiesce in his wishes, but had kept him in play, in order to give New Germany time to gather strength, and to see whether or not changes in France herself might render it possible to evade a war. The Emperor had to recognise the fact that, in each of his successive enterprises, he performed a new version of "Love's Labour Lost," and to be more and more oppressed by the consciousness how small a person he was in comparison to the German statesman. Then he bethought him of seeking assistance from other Powers; and he succeeded in acquiring a good friend in Beust, who, when in Paris, had advised him to utilize a dynastic question for the attainment of his purpose. The transfer of the Spanish throne to a Hohenzollern—although Prince Leopold was only distantly related to the Royal House of Prussia, and indeed by extraction stood nearer in blood to the Emperor Napoleon than to King William—was available, as an "outgrowth of Prussian ambition." It was believed in Paris and Vienna that the South-German Princes and peoples would

remain neutral at first; and then—after a great French victory, deemed as inevitable as Austrian triumphs had been considered in 1866—would become Napoleon's allies, with or against the grain. Irresolute, as he had ever been, the Emperor wavered for a long time, until at last his *entourage*, the Arcadians and Jesuits, induced him to adopt a fatal decision. The fault only cleaves in part to his memory. Far guiltier than he were the French upper classes, with their ignorance, mental opacity, and sinister insolence. Scarcely less blameable than they was the Gladstone Ministry, which at one moment, had it in its power to avert a struggle between the two great Continental nations, but—guided by its ill-concealed hatred and envy of rising young Germany—refused to send an earnest warning to Paris, and recommended humiliating behaviour to Prussia.

Let us see what the French press and parliamentary orators of that time had to say in the matter.

The *Moniteur* of July 8 delivered itself in the following terms:—"Our policy towards Spain must be a moderate one; but we are upon quite another footing with Prussia. This Power, self-deluded by its first successes, seems to think it can acquire preponderance, and even rule, throughout Europe. The time has come to put an end to such pretensions. The question must be enlarged; Prince Leopold's renunciation is no longer sufficient. The least we can demand, the least that will now satisfy us, will be the formal recognition and enforcement in word and spirit of the Prague Treaty; viz.: freedom for the South-German States, evacuation of the fortress of Mayence, which belongs to the South, renunciation by Prussia of any military influence beyond the Maine, and regulation of Article V. with respect to Denmark." The *Pays* vociferated:—"The Caudine Forks are awaiting Prussia; she will have to stoop and pass

under them, vanquished and disarmed without a struggle, if she does not dare to accept a combat the issue of which is in no way doubtful. Our war-cry has hitherto remained unanswered. The echoes of the German Rhine are still dumb. Had Prussia used the language to us that France has used to her, we should have been on the march long ago." Girardin's *Liberté* impetuously demanded that the matter should be settled at once by taking the left bank of the Rhine and driving the Prussians to the other bank with the butt-ends of French muskets.

In the Corps Législatif, when Gramont declared that negotiations with Prussia were still proceeding, the Arcadian Jérome David responded with an interpellation commencing thus:—"Considering that the firm and patriotic Ministerial utterances of the 6th are in flagrant contradiction of the laughable tediousness characterising the diplomatic negotiations . . ." The Minister thereupon proposing to discuss the interpellation two days later, Kératry—also eager for war with Germany, though no Bonapartist—shrieked out, "It is too late! You are playing Prussia's game! As a Frenchman I protest against such policy!"—speeches which afforded to the Chauvinistic journals an opportunity of raving even more wildly, and declaring:—"This Ministry will be known in the future by only one title—the Ministry of shame!" Ollivier elicited tempestuous applause from the majority of the Second Chamber on July 15, when he uttered the silly boast: "Certainly a grave responsibility rests upon us; but we accept it with a light heart—yes! with a light heart!" There was no lack of orators who disapproved of the Government's conduct. Deputy Choiseul said:—"It is impossible to declare war upon such grounds." Arago exclaimed:—"When this shall be made known, the civilised world will say that you are

in the wrong; and if you then declare war, everybody will know that you were resolved to do so at any price." Gambetta insisted that the "Note," which the Government had suppressed and thereafter continued to suppress, should at least be submitted to the Chamber. Thiers and Favre asseverated that "the honour of France was not at stake," and that was no ground whatsoever for making war. The debate closed with the grant, by 543 votes to 101, of the credit asked for by the Government.

The English Government made one attempt to settle the quarrel peaceably, but was anything but impartial in its action. It asked—in compliance with Gramont's request—the Prussian Ambassador in London (July 14) to urge King William to give a positive assurance to France that he approved of Prince Leopold's withdrawal, and would not permit such a candidature to recur. Count Bernstorff rejected this proposal, observing that Prussia, openly threatened by France, had displayed a tranquillity and moderation that would render any further concession humiliating; and that public opinion in Germany plainly demonstrated that war, even under the greatest difficulties, would be preferable to any yielding on the part of the King to France's unjustifiable demands. England again offered her good offices at Berlin (July 17) on a similar basis; and the next day at Paris. In both capitals she met with insurmountable objections to further negotiation. Bismarck replied to Lord Augustus Loftus that "negotiations could only be resumed if the French Cabinet should declare its willingness thereto beforehand. It had taken the initiative in the war, and adhered to that initiative even after the first complication had been materially got rid of. An initiative on our part," he continued, "would now be misunderstood by German national feeling, which has been

deeply wounded and violently excited by France's threats. Our strength lies in the patriotism, justice, and honour of our nation; the French Government has proved that it does not, to the same extent as ourselves, require support of that kind in its own country." Gramont answered the English Ambassador's offer of mediation with the remark that the Prussian Government's latest steps had rendered further negotiation impossible. Prussia, by publicly declaring that the King had broken off intercourse with the French Ambassador in a rough and discourteous manner, which statement was not founded on fact, had offered France a grave insult. Lord Lyons remarked that "the British Government had not been able to take the same view of this disastrous difference as that adopted by the Imperial Cabinet; but, be that as it might, the friendly feeling which was the happy outcome of many years' hearty concord between the two governments had suffered no abatement."

On July 16 the German Federal Council met to hear Bismarck's report upon the development of the quarrel, which concluded as follows:—"The Duke of Gramont's speech in the Corps Législatif rendered all further confidential negotiations impossible." ("If you want to make a bargain, never threaten," the Chancellor observed to me about that time.) "From the reception accorded to that oration, as well as the subsequent attitude of the French Government, it can only be concluded that the latter had from the first resolved to give us the choice between humiliation and war. We could not accept the former alternative; nothing was left to us but war." Upon this the Saxon Plenipotentiary declared his Government's full concurrence with every step thitherto taken by the Presidency of the Confederation; and the other members of the Federal Council endorsed his declaration.

In a Circular Despatch (July 18) to the Envoys of the Confederation, the Chancellor observed:—"All the endeavours of the French Ministers to prove that war is unavoidable are manifestly futile; we are under the melancholy necessity of seeking their real motives in the worst traditions—stigmatised for half a century past as infamous by the peoples and governments of the civilised world—of Louis XIV. and the First Empire, still inscribed upon the banner of a powerful party in France, which, however, we had believed Napoleon III. capable of withstanding. Unfortunately we are compelled to recognise the evil instincts of hatred and jealousy of Germany's independence and well-being (as well as the French Government's effort to repress freedom at home by warlike complications abroad) as the real motives that have prompted France to its present regrettable action."

On the 19th July the King opened the Reichstag with a speech recapitulating the circumstances above narrated and appealing to the patriotism of the country. The Reichstag replied next day by an enthusiastic address, to the following effect:—"One thought, one desire causes German hearts to throb in this momentous conjuncture. From the shores of the sea to the foot of the Alps the people has arisen at the call of its Princes, unanimous and firmly leagued together. It will regard no sacrifice as too heavy."

All the South German States commenced their warlike preparations on the 16th, and three days later the King of Bavaria (in virtue of the Treaty of August, 1866) placed his army under the command of the King of Prussia, an example forthwith followed by all the other Sovereigns of South Germany. Napoleon's hopes of Austrian and Italian support melted away likewise. When Gramont applied to Beust for aid, the latter returned a discouraging answer,

his French predilections being heavily outweighed by Hungarian feeling and the fear of Russian attack. On July 11, Beust wrote to the Austrian Ambassador in Paris: —"I consider it paramountly important that the Emperor Napoleon and his Ministers should not entertain the erroneous impression that they can, at their own good pleasure, drag us with them beyond the limits of our engagements, to the disregard of our own vital interests. They make much too bold in talking confidently about a Corps of Observation, to be stationed by us in Bohemia. The Duke has no right whatsoever to count upon any such measure on our part. All that we have undertaken is not to ally ourselves to any other Power without giving France due notice. We shall strictly fulfil that engagement. Moreover, we openly declare that we are friendly to France, and that she may rely upon our diplomatic support. I need not remind you that, in canvassing the possibilities of war, we have always declared ourselves ready to take action, should Russia side with Prussia, but resolved to remain neutral as long as Prussia should have to fight France unaided. . . It is alleged that Prussia will provoke war unless she shall withdraw the Hohenzollern candidature. On this point I will speak quite frankly. If war be inevitable, it is above all owing to the attitude assumed by France from the very inception of the difficulty. Her first announcements do not in the least partake of a diplomatic character, but practically constitute a declaration of war against Prussia, couched in terms that have aroused amazement throughout Europe and justified the conviction that she had made up her mind beforehand to war at any price. As Paris persists in displaying mere passion with respect to the whole affair, we cannot desire to sail in the same boat with her under such auspices. . . I will not say positively

that circumstances may not accrue which would dispose us to take part in the struggle now about to commence between France and Prussia; but Austria-Hungary is most assuredly not prepared to join in the war at its commencement. Up to a certain point our services are assured to France; but not beyond that point. Talk as emphatically as may be to Napoleon about our engagements and fidelity in fulfilling them, so that he may not precipitately come to an understanding, at our cost, with some other Power."

Another confidential despatch (July 20), addressed by Beust to the Austrian Ambassador in Paris, contains instructions to the latter concerning the proposals made a short time previously by Napoleon anent a treaty between France, Italy, and Austria:—"You will repeat to the Emperor and his Ministers that—true to the engagements defined in letters that passed between both Sovereigns last year—we regard France's cause as our own, and shall, within the limits of possibility, contribute to the success of her arms. These limits are prescribed by foreign considerations and our domestic condition. We have reason to believe that Russia adheres to her connection with Prussia, so that the intervention of Russian forces, under certain eventualities, may be regarded, not only as probable, but as certain. Our participation in the struggle would be immediately followed by that of Russia, who threatens us on the Pruth and Lower Danube, as well as in Galicia. The ostensible aim of our policy, for the present, must be to keep Russia neutral until the advanced season of the year shall no longer permit her to think of concentrating her troops, and to avoid giving her any offence or pretext for armed intervention. . . . As I frequently remarked during last year's conferences, we cannot ignore the fact that our ten millions of Germans regard this war, not as a

duel between France and Prussia, but as the commencement of a national struggle; nor can we disguise it from ourselves that the Hungarians would be extremely reluctant to sacrifice their blood and treasure for the re-establishment of our former position in Germany. Under these circumstances the word neutrality—which we do not pronounce without regret—is an imperative necessity, as far as we are concerned. But this neutrality is only a means to the attainment of our policy's real object, namely, to complete our armaments without exposing ourselves to a premature attack from Prussia or Russia. Whilst proclaiming our neutrality we have not lost a moment in negotiating with Italy respecting the joint intervention desired by the Emperor Napoleon . . . I have already referred by wire to the necessity of evacuating Rome. Whenever the French quit Rome the Italians must enter it, that very day, with the full consent of France and Austria. We shall never get the Italians to act with us unreservedly until we extract the Roman thorn. By one act of indisputably magnanimous policy, France would deprive her enemy of an important weapon and raise up a solid dam against the flood of Teutonism which Prussia, a Protestant Power *avant tout*, has evoked in Germany, and which is doubly formidable to us by reason of its contagious vigour."

This was prettily said, forsooth, when we come to consider that it was a German Protestant who gave utterance to the above estimable sentiments! However, "we would if we could, but we can't," was no help to Napoleon.

The French Emperor's fresh negotiations with Italy led to no result. General Tuerr, who conducted them, wrote to Paris on July 27, that the Italian Ministers had told him "Italy could only stand by France in her struggle with Prussia on condition that the French should give up Rome;

the Emperor should at least give his secret promise that Italy should have Rome, so that Victor Emanuel might hold out the solution of the "national question" to his people as the prize of war. But on the 29th, Tuerr, who had meanwhile travelled to Vienna, found at the French Embassy there a despatch from Gramont, answering his letter curtly and concisely: "We can do nothing whatsoever with respect to Rome. If Italy does not choose to march she can stay at home." Still, as Victor Emanuel was favourable to France, she had some prospect of obtaining Italy's support. On August 2, Count Vimercati, in the quality of Special Envoy, presented himself to Napoleon at Metz with a new edition of the Alliance-Treaty, in which Italy insisted upon the evacuation of Rome by the French. The Emperor again refused his consent to that stipulation, and suggested alterations in the Draft-Convention, hoping to be able to hold his own with the Germans for a time, and then—after a victory or two—to get the Italians and Austrians to take his part. But his expectations were not fulfilled. The Italian Plenipotentiary left for Florence on the 3rd, and three days later the French were beaten at Wœrth and Spicheren. Napoleon then volunteered to meet Italy's wishes; "she might do what she pleased with Rome, if she would promptly come to France's aid in arms." From Châlons, whither the Emperor had betaken himself after his defeat at Saarbruecken, Prince Napoleon went off to his father-in-law, King Victor, with this concession, decided upon without Gramont's knowledge, and arrived in Florence on the 20th. But the Italian Cabinet hesitated, alleging that it must consult Austria before adopting any definitive resolve; and as Austria took several days to consider the matter, the opportunity for rendering military assistance to France was lost. The battle of Sedan put an end to all

these intrigues. After that Napoleon himself was a prisoner, and, a little later on, ceased to be Emperor. What help was subsequently afforded by Italy to the Republic through Garibaldi and his red-shirted crew, did not signify anything to speak of.

In his report upon these occurrences Prince Napoleon remarks :—" An important fact is taught us by this episode, viz. : that the Clerical party was powerful enough to dominate Napoleon III. It directed the policy of France against the will of the Emperor and his chief councillors ; and that policy was the leading cause of our disasters. The Pope's Temporal Power cost France Elsass and part of Lothringen."

It was now time for Bismarck to consider what Germany should demand as the prize of victory. In all probability he entertained the notion of recovering possession of Strassburg and Elsass when war was declared. That project was hinted at in a despatch from Saarbruecken, and was openly talked about by his suite in Herny, whence a telegram referring to it was sent to Prussia ; and we know from the foregoing chapter that the reunion of Elsass to Germany had been contemplated by Bismarck as far back as 1866. In Commercy (August 23) during conversation at the dinner-table he indicated as his ideal solution of the question (one, however, that he deemed unattainable), " a sort of German colony in Eastern France, a neutral State, free from conscription, the taxes levied upon which should —so far as their local expenditure might not be requisite— flow into Germany. Thus France would lose the territories from which she obtained her best soldiers, and would be rendered inoffensive. As for the rest of France—no Bourbons, no Orleans ; perhaps Lulu, perhaps the fat Napoleon, perhaps the old Bonaparte again." Shortly

afterwards—even before Sedan—the plan subsequently carried out was developed and recommended in the press, by the Chancellor's orders. It was first avowed in a State document shortly after Napoleon's dethronal by the Revolution of September 4. Favre, the new French Minister of Foreign Affairs, in a Circular Despatch addressed to France's agents abroad (September 6), had declared that the Republic wished for peace, but that if Prussia should prosecute a war of conquest, Frenchmen would do their duty to the last. "We will not give up," he added, "an inch of our territory, or a stone of our fortresses. A dishonourable peace would speedily lead to a war of extermination. We will only treat for a lasting peace." That was also Bismarck's resolve; but he took another view of durability. In his Circular Despatch (Rheims, September 13) he informed Favre and the Powers who might be disposed to support that person's policy, that "the all but unanimous majority of the Legislature, the Senate and the organs of public opinion in France proclaimed a war of conquest against us so loudly and uncompromisingly that the isolated advocates of peace lacked courage to protest thereagainst; and the Emperor Napoleon did not tell our King an untruth when he assured him (as he still does) that public opinion compelled him to make war. In the face of this fact we cannot accept French feelings as our guarantees for the future. We must not deceive ourselves, but must make up our minds to fresh attacks from France, not to a lasting peace, as the consequence of this war. The French nation will never forgive its defeats or our victorious resistance to its unprincipled onslaught. Were we now to withdraw from France without exacting a cession of territory, a war-contribution, or any advantage but the glory won by our arms, the same hatred of us, the same desire

to avenge their wounded vanity and frustrated greed, would endure in the spirit of the French nation . . . The German people must not be again exposed to such a tremendous ordeal as the present one. Therefore, we can only be guided in our dictation of the terms of peace by the necessity of rendering it more difficult for France to attack us next time, and more especially to overrun the hitherto defenceless South-German frontier, by advancing that frontier, thereby thrusting back the starting point of French attack, and by utilising the fortresses (with which France threatens us) as defensive bulwarks of Germany . . . As long as France remains possessed of Strassburg and Metz, her offensive force—as far as the entire south and the north on the left bank of the Rhine—is stronger than our defensive force. Strassburg, held by France, is an ever open sally-port against Germany. In the hands of Germany, Strassburg and Metz assume a defensive character. In more than twenty past wars with France we have never been the assailants; nor do we demand anything from her now but that security, upon our own soil, which she has so often endangered. France, on the contrary, will regard any peace she may make now as nothing more than an armistice, and will attack us again, just as unscrupulously and savagely as this year, in order to avenge her present defeat, as soon as she shall feel strong enough, either by herself or with foreign Allies to do so. By placing obstacles in the French aggressiveness, which has hitherto originated every disturbance and trouble in Europe, we are acting in European interests, which are those of peace."

Bismarck's interviews with Favre (September 19 and 20), at Haute Maison and Ferrières, led to no result, as the French Minister, although ready to concede a pecuniary indemnity to any amount, sentimentally repelled the notion

of territorial cession as one incompatible with the honour of France. In his report upon these interviews Bismarck remarked :—" I was unable to convince him that conditions which France had obtained from Italy and demanded of Germany without having been at war with either country—conditions which France would undoubtedly have imposed upon us, had we been vanquished, and which had been the natural outcome of every modern war, could involve no dishonour to a country conquered after having gallantly defended itself; or that the honour of France differed in any essential respect from that of other countries." Upon the occasions referred to the conditions of peace were only discussed, as it were, *en passant* and "academically." The immediate subject of discussion was an armistice, which should give the French an opportunity to elect representatives who, in their turn, should legitimise the Provisional Government, thus enabling it to conclude an internationally valid peace. Bismarck pointed out that an armistice is always disadvantageous to an advancing and victorious army; that, in this particular case, it would involve a most important gain of time toFrance for the reorganisation of her forces; and that Germany must therefore exact a military equivalent, such as the surrender of the fortresses hampering the communications of the King's armies with Germany. With respect to Strassburg he observed that it was on the point of surrender. In case the "Constituante" Assembly should meet in Paris, Bismarck stipulated for the following alternatives: "Either Paris shall be placed in our power by the surrender of a part of the works commanding it, in which case we are prepared to open communications with that city and allow it to be provisioned; or we must base the armistice upon the maintenance of the military *status quo* before Paris, as otherwise the result of a suspension of

hostilities to us would be that we should find ourselves sitting down to reduce a city that had been provisioned and armed anew." Favre rejected the former alternative, but promised to submit the latter to the other members of the Provisional Government. The conditions arranged between them and carried back to Paris by Favre were refused by the latter's colleagues; and Bismarck made the following communication to the neutral Governments, of which the British and Austrian still manifested warm sympathy for the cause of France. "By refusing to avail itself of the opportunity offered to it to elect a National Assembly (even within the portions of French territory occupied by us) the French Government proves its determination to prolong the difficulties hindering it from effecting an international conclusion of peace, and to close its ears to the voice of the French people. That general and free elections would have led to peace is an impression strongly entertained by ourselves, and one which will not have escaped the authorities in Paris." The Tours branch of the Parisian crew pitchforked by popular tumult into the position of shaping the destinies of France declared however (September 24), in a pompous proclamation addressed to the country:—"Prussia is resolved to continue the war, and to reduce France to the rank of a second-rate Power. To such shameless pretensions our only possible reply is 'War to the knife!'"

To these extravagances Bismarck replied in a Circular (October 1):—"The cession of Strassburg and Metz, which we demand, involves a territorial diminution of France nearly equivalent to the increment she acquired by the annexation of Savoy and Nice; and a loss of population exceeding that of the provinces she obtained from Italy by about three quarters of a million. If we consider that,

according to the 1866 census, France counted 38 millions of inhabitants without, and 42 millions with Algeria, it becomes obvious that a diminution of three quarters of a million in population can in no way lessen her importance with respect to other countries, as it will leave this great realm in possession of exactly the same elements of power that enabled it to exercise so decisive an influence upon the destinies of Europe in the Eastern and Italian wars."

The neutral Powers continued to show sympathy for France; and Lord Granville as well as Count Beust, lost no opportunity of displaying their sentiments, but neither of them felt bound to assist France otherwise than by diplomatic suggestions. Thiers' round of calls at the leading European Courts missed its aim, which was to bring about an European armed intervention. He reported from Petersburg that the Czar, as well as Prince Gortchakoff, had expressed themselves warmly as "opposed to the imposition of extravagant conditions of peace, and had declared that Russia would never give her consent to unfair pretensions; but he could not get them to say what they considered "extravagant" and "unfair," nor to make any positive declaration in favour of maintaining French territorial integrity.

In October France's military prospects became worse and worse. Toul and Strassburg had fallen, Paris was closely invested, at Metz Bazaine was treating for the surrender of his forces, and the German troops had pushed their way as far as the Loire. Bismarck was still ready to conclude an armistice upon equitable conditions. Through the American generals Sheridan and Burnside he once more offered to the authorities in Paris the means of delivering the country from a state of anarchy which rendered peace negotiations impossible. His propositions met

with so unfavourable a reception in Paris, however, that the mediators themselves were compelled to renounce the hopes they had entertained of bringing the war to a close.

On the first of November, after Metz had capitulated, Thiers made his appearance in Versailles at the instigation of the neutral Powers in order to negotiate for an armistice. Upon this episode the German Chancellor reported in his Circular of November 8 :—"I proposed to him to fix the relative positions of both armies, as they stood on the day of signing the armistice, by a line of demarcation; to suspend hostilities for a month; and, during that time, to effect the elections and the constitution of a National Assembly . . . With respect to the elections in Elsass I was able to assure him that we would not insist upon any stipulation calling in question the appurtenance of the German Departments to France before the conclusion of peace, nor would we call any inhabitant of those Departments over the coals for having represented his compatriots in a French National Assembly. I was amazed when he rejected these proposals, and declared that he could only agree to an armistice if it should include a thorough provisioning of Paris. I replied that this would involve a military concession so far exceeding the *status quo* and every reasonable expectation that I must ask him what equivalent, if any, he was in a position to offer for it. M. Thiers declared that he was bound to demand the provisioning of Paris without offering anything in exchange but the readiness of the Paris Government to permit the French nation to elect a Representative Body, probably resulting in the constitution of a recognised authority with which we could subsequently treat for peace. The inconceivable demand that we should give up the fruits of all the exertions we had undergone during two months, and restore

affairs to the condition in which they had been when we commenced the investment of Paris, was a fresh proof that the Parisian authorities were only seeking pretexts for preventing the nation from electing its representatives."

At the close of his last interview with Thiers, the Chancellor requested him to inform his Government that, if it should wish to proceed with the elections without concluding an armistice, he (Bismarck) would give orders that no hindrance whatsoever should be offered to the elections in any of the districts occupied by the German army. But on November 6 Thiers received orders from his Government to break off negotiations and forthwith quit the Prussian head-quarters.

A very curious claim was put forward by the French with respect to the contemplated Conference for taking into consideration the Russian Circular of October 31. As France had signed the 1856 Treaty (which this Circular proposed to alter) she was invited to send a representative to London, where the Conference was to be held; and the Paris Government chose Favre, who, however, as he avowed with quaint frankness in a Circular Despatch (January 12), was not so much intended to assist in the discussion, at London, of the Russian Circular, as to protest against the bombardment of Paris, and to exhort the Powers to come to the aid of France. When, however, he applied to Bismarck (January 13) for a pass, he was informed that his request could not be granted, seeing that in it he had described himself as "the representative of France at the Conference," whereas the Paris Government had not yet been acknowledged by the French nation; and further, that he could not be permitted to go to London with the purposes avowed in his Circular of the 12th. To this refusal was appended a polite hint to the effect that those

who brew broth must help to eat it. Favre had sense enough to appreciate the justice of this suggestion. He stayed in Paris, and the Duc de Broglie went to London in his stead.

On Jan 20, 1871, the British Government instructed Odo Russell to ask the Chancellor whether he were inclined to treat for peace, and if so, upon what conditions. A change of feeling had taken place in Paris; the last sortie had proved a failure, the Communists were becoming dangerously active within the city, and what was still worse, famine was imminent. There was nothing for it but to capitulate; and the task was entrusted to Favre. On January 28, he and Bismarck signed an Armistice-Convention, empowering the authorities in Paris to convoke a freely-elected National Assembly which should decide whether France should continue fighting, or conclude peace—if the latter, upon what conditions. The advantages which Favre was compelled to yield to the Germans were considerably greater than those which Bismarck had asked for at Haute Maison and Ferrières or during his first interview with Thiers. All the forts of the outer line of defences had to be surrendered with their war materials, and the *enceinte* was stripped of its guns. The garrison (troops of the line, mobiles and marines) laid down their arms and became prisoners of war, all but 12,000 men, employed to keep order in the town. The National Guard retained its arms at Favre's request—a shortsighted one, as the civilians of which it was composed were for the most part infected with Radicalism. Paris was to be provisioned and was to pay a war-contribution of 200,000,000 francs. It was proposed that the German army should enter Paris, but Favre vehemently opposed the idea; and the Chancellor, believing the Parisians would offer violent resistance to such a proceed-

ing, and wishing to avert further bloodshed, agreed that the victorious hosts should not enter the town during the three weeks' armistice.

A frantic attempt on the part of Gambetta to frustrate all the hopes attached to this Convention having proved abortive, matters went on pretty smoothly. The National Assembly, of which Conservative and peaceful elements constituted the majority, assembled on February 12 at Bordeaux; next day the Provisional Government resigned its powers; on the 16th Thiers was elected Chief of the Executive; and three days later he declared to the Assembly that "the only possible or comprehensible policy was to make peace, reorganise, raise the national credit and re-animate labour." On the 21st he came with Favre to the Chancellor at Versailles, in order to open negotiations for peace in accordance with the policy in question. The French consented, although with difficulty, to cede Elsass with Strassburg, but stubbornly refused to part with Metz and a portion of Lothringen. Bismarck was not disinclined to give way on this point. On the 21st he said to us at table: "If they would pay us a milliard more perhaps we might leave them Metz. We could then devote 800,000,000f. to building a fortress a couple of miles further back, somewhere by Falkenberg, or in the direction of Saarbruecken, and gain 200,000,000 by the transaction. I do not want such a number of Frenchmen in our country against their will. . . . But the soldiers will not forego Metz, and perhaps they are right." Later on he seems to have become convinced that Metz was indispensable, for he insisted upon its retention, and rejected Thiers' proposal that it should be razed as "insufficient." Upon this point the negotiations came to a standstill. The Chancellor—as he then told those about him—was much exercised lest a refusal on the

part of the National Assembly at Bordeaux to ratify the stipulations should give the Neutral Powers occasion to meddle with the peace-negotiations, and compel Germany either to renounce the fruits of her victories, or engage in new wars. One day, after the preliminaries were signed, he said: "I feared that each successive postal delivery would bring me some communication from one of the neutral Powers, like that we received from Napoleon at Horsitz in 1866; if any one of them had belled the cat we should have had them all about our ears." When Thiers declared that he could not assume the responsibility of settling matters unless he obtained Metz or Belfort, but must return to Bordeaux, in order to elicit a decision from the Assembly, Bismarck again consulted the military authorities, who attached less importance to Belfort than to Metz, upon the cession of which latter they insisted. He therefore forewent Belfort, and the bargain was struck. He had originally demanded eight milliards as a war-indemnity, whilst Thiers would only concede two; five was the amount eventually fixed upon, England's mediation (invoked by France) having proved ineffectual. The Chancellor remained invisible to Odo Russell (who had been instructed by his Government to plead on behalf of France) until Thiers had agreed to the German demands.

Peace was to be definitively concluded at Brussels in accordance with the principles laid down in the preliminaries; but the matter dragged so vexatiously that the Chancellor had serious grounds for doubting the Frenchmen's good faith. They were lax in fulfilling their actual obligations, and obviously disposed to wilfully misinterpret stipulations already in force. Even as late as the end of April the French Government was behindhand with the main amount of the sums due for the maintenance of the German Corps of

occupation, with the deliverance of the German prisoners-of-war, and with clear, peremptory orders to the Governors of colonies and commanders of naval squadrons stationed in far-eastern waters to cease hostilities. The disposition of the French to evade their engagements, was manifested by their concentration (after the outbreak of the Commune *emeute*) of 140,000 men between Seine and Loire, where they had only a right to 40,000; by their attempts to depreciate the War-Debt by payments under par; and by unfounded pretensions with respect to the commencement of the evacuation of French territory by the German troops. The result of these tergiversations and frivolous claims was that Bismarck (April 27) instructed General von Fabrice (who was then keeping up diplomatic intercourse with the Versailles Government at Soissy) to demand clear and categorical explanations from the French authorities, and made up his mind to advise the King to withhold any further assistance from the French against the Commune (to overthrow which *régime* a large number of French prisoners-of-war had been set at liberty) and to require the French Government to instantly reduce its armed forces to the numbers prescribed in the Treaty, under pain of immediate renewal of hostilities.

Favre replied that France was ready to conclude peace without delay, meanwhile recognising the preliminaries already agreed to as decisive, and requested permission to attack Paris from St. Denis and Epinay, asking, moreover, that the Germans should summon the Commune to evacuate the *enceinte* of Paris. He was informed that Germany was bound by no agreement to assist the French Government, but, on the contrary, was entitled to demand from it the disarmament of the *enceinte*, and even to enforce the same should she consider it in her interest to do so—which would certainly not be the case as long as France should persist in

endeavouring to alter the preliminary peace to Germany's prejudice. The Chancellor proposed a meeting with the French Minister of Foreign affairs in Frankfort or Mayence; Favre accepted the invitation, and a conference was arranged for the first week in May.

What the Chancellor thought of the Parisian insurgents may be gathered from an article published by him on April 29: "Many letters from Paris indicate that the rising in Paris and establishment of the Commune constitute an achievement of cosmopolitan Revolution—an attempt to realise Socialistic and Communistic fancies. As a matter or fact, cosmopolitan Revolution, with which our Imperial members of Parliament Bebel and Schraps sympathise so deeply, has rallied Messrs. Dombrowski, Stupny, Okolovich, Landuski, Burnaki, and other Polish barricade-heroes, as well as the Fenians, Garibaldians and countless Belgian and English members of the International, round the red flag of the Commune. It is communism of the grossest description which has tempted from fifteen to twenty thousand released criminals and other scum and dregs of modern society to lend their aid to these champions of cataclysm. In this resolution however, bad as it is, may be detected a movement founded upon reason and supported by orderly and intelligent social elements; viz. the effort to obtain a sensible municipal organization, and to emancipate the communes from vexatious and unnecessary State tutelage; an effort finding its explanation in French history, and its exact converse in Haussmann's tyrannical proceedings, so injurious to the interests of the Paris Municipality. Were the Parisians endowed with a municipal Constitution like that possessed by Prussian cities ever since the days of Hardenberg, many practical thinkers in Paris who now hold aloof from the Versailles Government would be satisfied, and no longer support the revolution by passive resistance."

Bismarck's interviews with Favre at Frankfort resulted in the signature (May 10) of a Treaty of Peace, which was accepted by the National Assembly on the 18th and ratified on the 20th. In his report to the Reichstag upon the matter, the Chancellor observed, *inter alia*:—"We were in a position, had an understanding proved unattainable, to terminate our incertitude by taking possession of Paris—either with the consent of the Commune or by force—and then requiring the Versailles Government to withdraw their troops beyond the Loire (in conformity to the stipulations of the preliminary peace) in order that we might resume peace negotiations, each party occupying the respective position thus attained. . . . When I went to Frankfort I did not hope to settle matters finally, but to obtain an abridgement of the terms fixed for payment of the war-indemnity, and an improvement in the nature of the guarantees for that payment. But, in the prospect of a definitive settlement which became manifest at Frankfort I recognised an enormous advantage to both countries concerned therein, being convinced that such an arrangement will not only materially lighten the military burdens Germany has hitherto had to bear, but will contribute in no inconsiderable measure to the consolidation of affairs in France. . . . This settlement will probably not please everybody; but I think it realises all that we could demand from France in reason and conformably to the traditions connected with transactions of this class. We have secured our frontiers by territorial annexation; we have, so far as it is humanly possible, ensured payment of our war-indemnity. I feel confident that the present French Government intends to carry out the treaty honestly, which it is perfectly able to do, and that there is no foundation for the assumption that the amount of the war-indemnity is extravagantly large. I

sincerely hope that this peace will be a lasting one, and that we shall not be called upon, for many years to come, to utilise the additional means of protection against a renewed attack with which we have now provided ourselves.

Subsequent events have justified the Chancellor's anticipations in this respect. The Frankfort Treaty supplemented by conventions of Oct. 12, 1871, June 29, 1872, and March 15, 1873, was fulfilled in every particular. When the vengeful feelings of France expressed itself in deeds of violence, and German soldiers were murdered by fanatics in Melun and Paris, Bismarck demanded that the assassins, Tonnelet and Bertin, should be given up, but, relying upon the French administration of justice, did not insist upon their transfer to German custody. As the juries, however, pronounced verdicts of "Not Guilty" in both cases, he brought crimes committed against the troops within German jurisdiction by declaring a state of siege in the occupied districts, and instructed the representative of Germany at Versailles (Dec. 7, 1871) to inform the French Minister of Foreign affairs that for the future, should the perpetrators of such crimes not be given up, "French hostages would be conveyed to Germany and further reprisals enforced." He also remarked:—"Although France attacked us last year without the least provocation, the bitterness with which the circumstance that we defended ourselves victoriously has inspired the classes of French society to which jurymen, State prosecutors, barristers and judges belong is of so passionate a character, that we shall be compelled—in our still pending negotiations with France—not only to provide guarantees for the fulfilment of our peace-conditions but for the protection of our positions in the occupied Departments." Thiers, at that time President of the Republic, warned his compatriots against "inconsiderate acts" in his Message of

Dec. 7, adding: "To those who may believe that killing a foreigner is not murder, I must observe that they are abominably in error," and imploring French judges to remember that "thousands of Frenchmen would be exposed to terrible reprisals if such an assumption were acted upon."

To a despatch of Count Arnim (then German Ambassador in Paris) mentioning that the German Empress had asked Guizot to advise her how the French hatred of Germany might be abated, and complaining of the intensity and generality of that feeling throughout France, the Chancellor replied (February 2, 1873) *inter alia*:—"If it be correct that Her Majesty the Empress has asked M. Guizot's advice as to how French hatred of us may be modified, a feeling innate to feminine sensibility doubtless dictated that step. But it does not lie within Your Excellency's province to soothe the unjustifiable ire of our neighbours so long as any such endeavour shall continue to be as manifestly futile as it is inconsistent with our national dignity. We did not desire war; but we are quite ready to wage it again whenever fresh aggressions on the part of France shall compel us to do so. *Odcrint dum metuant* . . . The feelings of the French people were well known to those Germans who went to France after the war in order to seek their livelihood there; they were bound to be prepared to undergo persecution and humiliation, and should have possessed peculiar personal capacities for enduring such unpleasantnesses for pecuniary considerations. If they attached primary importance to respectful treatment they would have done better to devote their talents and working abilities, not to our enemies, but to their own country, where both would have earned the recognition and recompense they might have deserved. Although I hold it to be the invariable duty of His Majesty's Govern-

ment to protect the interests of our fellow-countrymen abroad, I cannot sympathise with the 'Parisian of German extraction,' who is only so far German as he may happen to require our protection and assistance." The persons of this class who made the most fuss were nearly all journalists or clerks of Semitic origin.

The French Ultramontanists, in their press organs and episcopal Pastoral Letters, passionately supported the agitation got up by their colleagues in Germany. Their most violent utterance emanated from the Bishop of Nancy (it was published in the *Univers*) who asserted that Germany was conspiring with Italy and Switzerland to persecute the Roman Catholic Church, and then broke out into coarse invective against the German Emperor and Government. French law was competent to deal with these excesses; but the Minister of Justice refrained from enforcing it. Bismarck, however, could not put up with them, and so Count Arnim was instructed (by Decrees dated January 3 and 11) to address the Duc de Décazes upon the subject of these illegal proceedings, and to demand their suppression and punishment, which was effected in due course. At the same time a despatch was transmitted to Germany's representatives abroad pointing out that Germany was sincerely desirous to live at peace with France; but that, should a collision become manifestly inevitable, Germany would not be able to reconcile it with her conscience or duty to her people to await the moment that might appear most favourable to France. Germany's immediate antagonist was ecclesiastical Rome. Whenever France should identify herself therewith, she would become Germany's sworn foe. The surest guarantee for European peace and for the tranquil development of popular political life on both sides of the Vosges would be the sepa-

ration of the French Government from the Ultramontane cause.

In the years 1876–7 French hatred of Germany displayed itself in formidable proportions, upon which account the Chancellor strongly advised his fellow-countrymen not to contribute to the Paris Exhibition of 1878, as the President of the French Republic, Marshal MacMahon, wished and entreated them to do; and Bismarck's advice was followed, although the Empress, in her anxiety to further the prospects of peace, eagerly advocated the Marshal's desire. When the latter's invitation was declined, he sent the Marquis d'Abzac, an exceptionally agreeable gentleman, to make a last appeal. The Marquis was a skilled performer upon the shawm of peace and produced extremely melting tones from that instrument. He declared that, with the invitation in question, France was stretching out the hand of reconciliation towards Germany; that the Exhibition itself would be a Congress of Peace; why should Germany roughly reject the offered hand of her former foe, now become her friend and loyal neighbour; and so on, in flattering and moving terms, most gracefully expressed. The immediate result was another application to the highest quarter on behalf of unsophisticated, benevolent, and sweetly-supplicating France. But it was all of no use. Bismarck stood fast, the Emperor resolutely backed him up, and Monsieur le Marquis finally obtained nothing but—one of the most exalted decorations of Prussian chivalry. Supposing it had been otherwise; that the highest authority had disregarded an insight into the nature of the actual circumstances clearer than its own; and that the President of the Republic's messenger had returned to Paris with an acceptance of France's invitation to the *soi-disant* peaceful festivity. What would probably have happened then?

Germany would have put in an appearance at the Exhibition, and her exhibitors would, at the very least, have been placed in a very uncomfortable position and exposed to all sorts of dangers; in short, occurrences would most assuredly have taken place which would have engendered bitter feeling, perhaps would have led to a paper-war, and possibly even to something worse.

The Chancellor's views with respect to French parties, and to the form of government in France which would be most advantageous to German interests, are made plainly manifest in his instructions forwarded to Count Arnim in the year 1872, when the French Monarchists were preparing the overthrow of President Thiers and the "restoration" of one of the three pretenders to the throne; when Count de Chambord all but regained possession of the crown lost to his House in 1830; and when Gambetta's influence began to make itself felt in the Republican camp.

On May 6, 1872, Arnim sent in a report to the Chancellor upon the situation in France, in which he asserted that, "according to a widely spread conviction, universal suffrage could only produce one of two results—Gambetta or Napoleon. It is indisputable that the former gains ground daily in the provinces, particularly in the south of France. Socialism and Red Democracy are rapidly recruiting adherents amongst the country-folk, and nowadays the peasants are more out and out Radicals than the Parisians themselves. In Marshal Bazaine's opinion the army is favourable to Gambetta and the Red Republic. The only existing influence capable of counterbalancing the exorbitant power of Democracy (which, by the way, will only find its transitory expression in Gambetta) is that of the name, Napoleon . . . I opine that we should not reject the relations now sought to be established with us by the

Bonapartists; the less so as, on the one hand, they are not hatching any intrigues against the present Government, and, on the other, because of all the parties here they constitute the only one which openly seeks our support and inscribes reconciliation with Germany upon its programme, whilst all the others scrupulously avoid any intercourse with us and are vowed to a war of revenge upon Germany. In the Duc d'Aumale's candidature I recognise as great a danger as in that of Gambetta; and the so-called 'respectable Republic,' represented by Casimir Périer or Grévy, can be nothing more than a state of transition, leading to Gambetta. Even Thiers' own system has become impossible by reason of his increasing intimacy with Gambetta. Therefore the most desirable development of the political situation appears to me to be that which, on the one hand, will give us time to make arrangements with the actual Government for the speedy payment of the three milliards, and, on the other, shall so hasten the inevitable change of administration that the presence of our troops in France shall give us an opportunity of exercising a decisive influence upon the crisis." Bismarck replied (May 12) to this communication: —"Your observations only confirm private intelligence reaching me from other quarters to the effect that the Orleans Princes are rapidly losing ground in France, chiefly through their conduct with respect to money-matters; and I quite agree with Your Excellency that Germany has no cause to desire their accession to rule, and that the Bonapartist party—of all those which are struggling to achieve power—is the only one from which endurable relations between Germany and France may be hopefully anticipated. It naturally remains our duty, however, to sustain the present Government as long as it shall continue to represent the resolve of France to carry out the Peace

Treaty loyally. Whatever may succeed, it will have to legitimize itself anew in that direction, as far as we are concerned; we are not called upon to lean exclusively towards the Bonapartist party, nor, on the other hand, to do anything to weaken it or damage its position in the eyes of the French nation. To take its part and favour it, departing from our accustomed attitude of reserve, would certainly produce those results."

In November, General von Manteuffel confidentially informed Prince Bismarck that Count de St. Vallier had told him "Arnim had recently observed in his presence that he considered the actual French Government to be untenable; that Gambetta would succeed Thiers, the Commune Gambetta, and that the Commune, in its turn, would be followed by a military *régime*, unless France should fancy the reintroduction of monarchy, *àpropos* of which the Ambassador (Arnim) had referred to the Count of Paris and to the Emperor Napoleon's son." The Chancellor requested Arnim to acquaint him with what really had taken place, to the best of his remembrance, and received answer that Manteuffel's communication was founded upon misapprehensions. But his despatch showed that he regarded the Republic in France as a danger, likely to prove contagious, and opined that Thiers himself looked upon it as a "means towards revenge;" he believed, moreover, that the monies owing by France to Germany would be paid, no matter what form of government might be in power. Replying to him on November 23, the Chancellor's representative, Von Balan, wrote: "Prince Bismarck is by no means of opinion that no French government would think of failing to discharge France's pecuniary obligations to Germany. On the contrary, His Highness deems that our interests require us, before all else, to obtain a full

settlement of the war indemnity and fulfilment of the Peace-Treaty, and that, henceforth as heretofore, we should leave French home affairs to develope themselves, or at least not assume towards them an attitude dictated by foregone deductions and projects. Under certain circumstances, of course, we may favour those elements which suit our interests; but we must wait until they appear openly upon the stage, not utilise them like conspirators. France, if monarchically constituted, would threaten us with greater dangers than those which Your Excellency apprehends from the contagious influence of Republican institutions, the spectacle presented by which is more likely to appal than to attract. . . . It would be quite out of the question for us to get on with the Legitimists, as their convictions will always remain papistical. . . . It would be going too far to assume that any other form of government in France but the Republican would be unacceptable to us. . . . But on the other hand, were we to support any other government, we should necessarily inherit its enmities, and should put France into the position of being able to contract alliances, which she is at present incapable of doing."

On Dec. 20 the Chancellor again addressed to Count Arnim a refutation of the latter's views respecting German policy towards France, giving expression to ideas which have guided his actions in that direction up to the present day, and which, as their correctness has been proved by events, may here be reproduced at some length:—

"The state of affairs in France is such as to render it difficult, if not impossible, for the most experienced diplomatist to form a sound judgment upon the condition of the country, the importance of individual political parties, and the probabilities of the immediate future. This difficulty is aggravated by the unappraisable passionateness

which is peculiar to the French character, and from which even the riper French statesmen are less free than the majority of German and English statesmen. It is, however, supremely important for the Imperial German Government not to judge the situation in France and its consequences erroneously, nor to accept false premises as correct and sound bases for its own policy. In such a situation as the present I deem it the duty of the German Empire's official representative to carefully test and sift his impressions before reporting them to me. For, considering of what fatal importance to the future of Germany and Europe any decision of His Majesty may be, it would be extremely perilous to both were the essential anticipations adopted in exalted quarters to turn out incorrect, although deemed indubitable, and announced as such, by the Imperial Embassy in Paris. My recognition of this danger constrains me to tell Your Excellency that I consider your confidently expressed conviction, viz., that the arrears due to us are certain to be paid, whatever form of government may prevail in France, to be quite erroneous, and the assurance given by Your Excellency to that effect, an extremely audacious one. I deem it probable that the payments will be effected if Thiers shall remain at the helm, or if governmental affairs shall observe a regular and legal development. But I fear that we shall again be compelled to enforce the satisfaction of our claims with the sword if a Republic, led by persons of a different description, should be violently substituted for the present one. In view of this possibility it behoves us not to weaken the existing Government, or contribute to its fall. Were one of the monarchical Pretenders to obtain possession of power before the war contribution shall be paid and French territory evacuated by our troops, matters would take quite another turn, and,

I fear, one highly unsatisfactory to us. We should then be politely requested to foster the growth of the young monarchical germ by making concessions to the Monarchy, with respect to payment and evacuation, which we had refused to the Republic. Of course we could decline to do so; but that, I apprehend, would be rendered difficult by the action of other Cabinets—especially of those with which we stand upon terms of close friendship"—(the Chancellor had Petersburg in his mind) "which would more or less urgently recommend us to show some consideration to the monarchical element in France. Although people in London, Petersburg and Vienna are too clever to believe that Monarchical France would be less dangerous to us than the accidental rule of Republican fractions in France, the assumption that they entertain that belief is too convenient a screen for endeavours in other directions not to be utilised to mask the vexation inspired by our position and by the transfer of the milliards from France to Germany, which no doubt causes great inconvenience to everybody except ourselves. In this manner a highly inconvenient European group might be rapidly formed, which would exercise pressure upon us—friendly pressure at first—in order to induce us to forego some part of the advantages we have gained. Later on, probably, analogous phenomena would accrue; anyhow it is certainly not our business to make France powerful and alliable (*buendnissfaehig*) for our whilom friends by consolidating her internal affairs and helping her to re-establish a well-organised monarchy.* France's enmity compels us to desire that she should

* This probability occurred to Prince Bismarck during the war with France. On August 23rd, 1870, I wrote at his dictation the following article for the German Press:—"It is now positively certain that the Orleans Princes, expecting to see the Napoleonic star pale and sink still

remain weak; and we should be acting too disinterestedly did we not resolutely and vigorously oppose her in any endeavour to establish consolidated monarchical institutions so long as the Peace of Frankfort shall not be fully carried out. . . Your Excellency believes and has verbally expressed to His Majesty that the actual endurance of Republican institutions in France is dangerous to monarchical institutions in Germany. I conceive that Your Excellency would not have formed this apprehension had not foreign affairs chiefly occupied your attention for some years past, and had a protracted sojourn in Germany put you in a position to arrive at a competent judgment. Your Excellency states in your last report that connections exist between French Democracy and Southern Germany. This can hardly be less of a novelty to Your Excellency than it is to us here; for forty years the archives of all our offices at home and abroad (including, as I have

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lower, consider their time *is* come. Calling attention to the circumstance that they are Frenchmen, they have placed their swords at the disposal of France during the present crisis. The Orleans Family lost its throne chiefly through its indolence and careless *laisser-aller* with respect to developments in neighbouring countries. It seems to desire to regain that throne by a display of energy, and would endeavour to retain it by yielding to the lusts of Chauvinism, the thirst for glory and the ambition to patronise the whole world which are such conspicuous French characteristics. We have not yet finished our job. A decisive victory is probable, but not certain; Napoleon's fall seems to be near, but has not yet taken place. Should it occur, can we be satisfied with that result of our enormous exertions, keeping the above facts in mind; can we believe that we shall really have attained our object—a firm and durable peace? A peace concluded with an Orleans, restored to the throne of France, would doubtless be a less genuine peace than one effected with Napoleon, who has at least accumulated glory enough. Sooner or later we should again be challenged by France, who would by that time probably be better armed and *sure of powerful Alliances.*"

reason to believe, that of the Paris Embassy, readily available to Your Excellency) have contained voluminous and deplorable particulars of the connections alluded to, which have existed since the Revolution of July, and longer still, not only with Southern Germany, but with Switzerland, Belgium, England, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Hungary and Poland. Their intensity has been proportionate with France's prestige in Europe; for no monarchical government in France, however severely it may persecute French Democracy, disdains to employ Democracy as a weapon against other States, particularly against Germany. It is always the same thing over again, as it was in the case of the oppression of Protestants in France and their protection by Germany, or in that of the philo-Turkish policy of His Most Christian Majesty Louis XIV. I am convinced that it would never occur to any Frenchman to aid us in recovering the blessings of a monarchy had it pleased God to afflict us with the curse of a Republican anarchy. To carry out in deeds that sort of benevolent sympathy or hostile neighbours is an essentially German peculiarity. But the Government of his Majesty the Emperor is all the less called upon to take this unpractical proclivity into account because it can have escaped no impartial observer how vigorous and general—since the Commune made its *experimentum in corpore vili* before the eyes of all Europe—has been the reaction in Germany from extreme to moderate Liberalism and from the latter to Conservatism; from doctrinary Opposition to a feeling of interest in and responsibility for the State. Were France to perform yet another act of the Commune's interrupted drama, it would contribute materially towards still further demonstrating the advantages of a monarchical Constitution and towards developing attachment to monarchical institutions. What we want is

to be left in peace by France: and, if she will not let us alone, to prevent her from obtaining allies. As long as she has none, she is not dangerous to us; and as long as the great European Monarchies hold together, no Republic is dangerous to them. On the other hand, a French Republic will not readily find a monarchical ally against us. This being my conviction, it is impossible that I should advise His Majesty the King to encourage the French Monarchical Right, a proceeding which would involve the strengthening of an Ultramontane element which is hostile to us."

Since that time the Chancellor's whole policy towards France has been one of prescient benevolence. The last characteristic utterances of his views and intentions anent our Western neighbours related to his attitude in the Tunisian question, and were expressed in the declaration published by the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* when Italy's accession to the Austro-German Alliance was being discussed in newspapers and Parliaments.

When the Sultan transferred the occupation and administration of Cyprus to the English by Convention (June 4, 1878) that proceeding gave umbrage to the Mediterranean Powers, France and England, to which their representatives gave vent at the Berlin Congress; whereupon Lord Salisbury remarked to the French Plenipotentiary, Waddington:—"Do what you like with Tunis; England will raise no objections." If, however, Oppert (the 'Times' correspondent) has told the truth, the German Chancellor was no less favourable to the French enterprise. Oppert wrote at that time:—"Bismarck himself said to me, 'When I first saw Lord Beaconsfield I told him he should make arrangements with Russia instead of quarrelling with her; should let her have Constantinople and take Egypt in exchange; France

would not prove inexorable—besides one might give her Syria or Tunis!' I thought he was jesting; but he had previously spoken in the same sense to Lord Salisbury and Waddington. As Bismarck did not then know of the Cyprus transaction, Salisbury made no answer; but Waddington replied that France had no views upon Tunis herself, but would not permit any other Power to establish itself there to the injury of her Algerian possessions."

Later on (April, 1881) the French forewent this abstinence (if it had ever existed), sent an army to Tunis, occupied the country, and coerced the Bey into signing a Treaty which conferred the Protectorate upon France. The Chancellor was consulted respecting the undertaking, and replied encouragingly to the questions addressed to him from Paris. But the motives assigned to him by the press were founded upon incorrect hypotheses. It was asserted that he reckoned upon France (by reason of her aggressive disposition) involving herself in a quarrel with one or more European Powers; that he had advised the Italian Government to take up the cause of the oppressed Bey energetically; and that he hoped, should this be done boldly and persistently, to see the official good understanding thitherto obtaining between Germany's oldest enemy and youngest friend finally broken up. Should France treat Italy's representations with contempt, thereby giving her occasion to take offence, Germany would stand by Italy in a war between the two Powers.

More trustworthy than the above appears to us information reaching us from another source, to the effect that the Chancellor expressed his views upon the matter as follows:—"It is ridiculous to attempt to discover secret motives and *arrières-pensées* in Germany's attitude towards the Tunisian question. But it does not surprise me. Just

because Germany's policy in this affair is so manifestly dictated by the nature of things, those who hatch political *canards* and peddle with national idiosyncracies are eager in their search after malicious *arrières-pensées.* The so-called Tunisian question has been up to the present moment a purely French concern, of no importance save from the standpoint of France's internal policy, i.e., as a lay-figure upon which she may experimentalise with her new civil and military organisation. Nothing is more natural than that she should do in Tunis whatever her military and political interests may require. Every French success in Tunis must necessarily be advantageous to the interests of the rest of Europe, which are constantly being prejudiced by the disorder prevailing in such abortive States as the Regency. French successes in that direction are welcome to Germany because they keep France in a good humour. The preservation of peace cannot be more effectively achieved than by contenting those who were formerly our enemies for reasons that belong to the past and have nothing whatever to do with the present. Every former enmity becomes in time a political *chiffre* which may be exactly appraised and utilised in a peaceful calculation, such as is far preferable to a calculation with an untrustworthy factor, neither friend nor foe."

It was obvious who was meant by this "factor." Tunis in French hands could not be agreeable to England, any more than France's whole new colonial policy; which first took action in the annexation of that portion of the Mediterranean coast and subsequently awakened English jealousies in Madagascar and Tonkin and on the Congo. Apart from this, the German Chancellor's standpoint in the Tunis question was the following. "In this matter French statesmen alone are competent to judge and act, and they

have no disfavour or interference to apprehend from Germany. German interests prescribe no meddling on our part, if France looks to her own advantage in North Africa. On the contrary, her doing so will be doubly agreeable to us; in the first place, because whatever satisfaction she may obtain there and elsewhere across the seas will modify her discontent with respect to losses nearer home; in the second, because a country which once flourished exceedingly, and then was ruined through falling into the hands of savages, will be regenerated by a civilised people, and thus enabled to flourish once more and contribute to the general prosperity of mankind."

As a matter of fact Germany's attitude towards France in the Tunisian affair was and has remained a favourable one. When the Cabinet of Rome expressed the wish that France's treaty with Mohammed Es Sadok should be submitted to the approval of an European Congress, Bismarck declared that he would not raise any difficulties for France in the matter; and, as Austria-Hungary endorsed his declaration, no further attempts were made to disturb France in her new possessions. The French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Barthélémy St. Hilaire, in a private letter of May 12, 1881, expressly recognised the benevolent sentiments manifested by Bismarck, in these words:—"We can only praise Germany's behaviour throughout this important question, and I gladly express the gratitude we owe to the German Chancellor."

As in the Tunisian question, so did Bismarck act with respect to that of Egypt, when the latter cropped up; and if French politicians omitted to safeguard the interests of their country by taking part in the overthrow of Arabi it was in no way attributable to Germany. Their irritation against us was therefore groundless and unjustifiable. The

coolness supervening between France and England was a result of events for which not Germany, but an erroneous appraisement of her intentions, was to blame.

During the Tunisian difficulty Italian journals complained that Germany had not uncompromisingly taken Italy's part. The answer to these reproaches was obvious: Had Italy's behaviour, since 1866, always been such as to impose upon Germany the obligation to take up the cudgels for her, even diplomatically, every time the sphere (enlarged at the bidding of Italian caprice) of her interests should be impinged upon by any neighbouring Power? Were Italy's relations to our ally on the Danube sincerely friendly? did she not rather entertain dishonest projects of territorial aggrandisement at Austria's cost?

Later on Italy began to understand in which direction her true interests lay, and by degrees an understanding became feasible. In April, 1883, Mancini, the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, delivered a speech in the Chamber upon Italy's relations to her neighbours, immediately followed by a Reuter telegram containing the sensational intelligence that a formal offensive and defensive Treaty, aimed against France, had been concluded between Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy.

Mancini had only repeated in other words portions of a speech pronounced (October 31, 1882) by Count Kalnoky to the Delegation at Pesth, viz.:—"King Humbert's visit to Vienna was prompted by two motives; firstly, to give expression to Their Italian Majesties' friendly feeling for our Imperial House, and secondly, to let the world know that Italy desired to identify herself with the peaceful and Conservative policy of the Austro-Hungarian Cabinet." To this Kalnoky added (November 9, 1882):—"The foreign relations of the Monarchy are in the highest degree

satisfactory. The intimate relations existing between the two Empires constitute a guarantee of peace acknowledged by the other Powers. The Czar also, despite many occurrences, announces his desire for peace. During the past year Italy signified her wish to adhere to our policy. Our friendly relations to England have been strengthened by events in the East. As far as human forecast can prognosticate the future, peace is assured."

Mancini spoke still more clearly in the Italian Senate, where he had to do with enemies as well as friends, and with adherents to France, such as Senator Alfieri. His remarks were led up to by Senator Caracciolo, who expressed the wish that the differences of opinion then obtaining between Italy and France might be arranged, and the expectation that Italy's excellent relations with Germany and Austria-Hungary might contribute materially to the success of a peaceful and Conservative policy. Mancini thanked him for acknowledging the Government's endeavours to heighten Italy's prestige abroad, and more particularly for endorsing its efforts to render her relations with the Central European Allies more cordial and intimate. The success of those efforts had already made itself manifest in the understanding arrived at by the three Governments with respect to important questions, as well as in the increase of Italy's influence in the European Areopagus. He must refrain, at the dictates of prudence, from further declarations upon this theme. Italy, however, was no longer isolated; she was co-operating with the other Powers in consolidating the tranquillity of Europe and the peaceful progress of civilisation, whilst guarding her own independence and dignity. Her understanding with those Powers would possess the great advantage of impeding every kind of aggressive policy. It was unnecessary

to indicate the designation and form of that understanding. Caracciolo had been in the right to say that no feeling hostile to France had prompted Italy to affect a *rapprochement* to the Central European Powers. It was the unanimous desire of the members of the Cabinet to avoid any pretext for misunderstanding with France, and to constantly improve Italy's relations with that country. But feelings of true regard for France were not incompatible with watchful care of Italy's interests, which would prevent still greater inconveniences from being occasioned by accomplished facts (the annexation of Tunis) and could not possibly remain indifferent should a Mediterranean Power embark in an elaborate colonial policy.

The Reuter despatch above alluded to aroused a noisy and heated discussion in the European press. It was remarked by certain English and Austrian journals (credited with official inspiration) that if there were any truth in the announcement Austria must have made a sacrifice in deference to the German Chancellor's wishes. Other journals doubted the existence of any such alliance, and complained of the attitude theretofore observed by Italy: the *Standard*, for instance, whose Vienna correspondent notoriously derived some of his political opinions from the Literary Bureau of the I. R. Foreign Office, and who, therefore, was what is called "a well-informed correspondent." The *Standard* was convinced that Europe need not fear that Germany and Austria would attempt to induce Italy to adopt a policy hostile to France. It opined that those Powers required no support from a third Power, and that the German Chancellor was too clever a politician to trouble himself about getting up coalitions against France, so long as the latter should conduct herself peacefully. German and Austrian policy had hitherto been of a peaceful

nature, and had therefore earned everybody's good will. As much could not be said for Italy, who had for a long time past displayed considerable restlessness. She appeared, however, to have changed her mind, to have drawn closer to Germany and Austria, and thereby to have furnished a guarantee that she would thenceforth pursue a peaceable and Conservative policy. French statesmen at the head of affairs in Paris must have lost all comprehension of foreign affairs should they intend to give Austria and Italy a pretext for assuming a threatening attitude towards the French Republic.

There was a good deal of truth in this reasoning; but the gist of the question—whether or not the Triple Alliance announced by Reuter really existed—was only touched upon therein, and denied rather than confirmed. The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* spoke out much more plainly in an article emanating from the most authoritative source, declaring that neither the Allies nor Italy could experience any desire to form alliances against any other Power, seeing that the policy of those three States aimed exclusively at the preservation of peace. Least of all was the assumption justified that any one of the three felt called upon to take hostile action against France, alone or in concert with the others. It was obviously the interest, individually and collectively, of the three States to maintain the peace of Europe, and consequently possible—nay, even probable—that they would act in common to withstand any wilful breach of that peace, from whatever quarter it might be threatened. Apart from this motive of co-action, none of the three Powers had any reason to entertain projects disadvantageous to France, or any cause for apprehension that their tranquillity was menaced by that country. "If"—and in this paragraph lay the article's chief significance—

"rumours arise leading to the impression that the three Powers' common purpose, viz. : the maintenance of peace, is bound up with an *arrière pensee* having relation to France, those rumours can only be ascribed to the anxiety lest peace should be disturbed by France in consequence of some change in her form of government. Such an apprehension could only be justified should convulsions, subversive of the existing State Laws of France, place a personage or principle in power which should endeavour to consolidate an uncertain rule at home by appealing to the warlike proclivities of the nation. Should such an event accrue, the question would have to be considered whether or not each one of the three Powers, whose alliance is alluded to, would be certain of retaining its present measure of independence and security after France should have conquered any one of them. Let us suppose that France, impelled by some internal convulsion, should attack Germany; Austria and Italy would have to ask themselves what their position would be should France (with or without allies) overcome Germany and break up or paralyse the newly-founded Empire. That position would certainly be one diplomatically restricted, and possibly, soon afterwards, threatened from a military point of view. Again, were Italy attacked by France, German and Austrian politicians would have to consider whether they could suffer France to push to frontiers further eastwards by annexation, or in the form of a Cisalpine Republic, or that Italy should become dependent upon France through the results of a disastrous war. A direct attack upon Austria by France is only feasible nowadays by the latter's co-operation with Italy, thanks to frontier conditions; but Austria has no interest in giving such an eventuality another chance, like that which France and Italy availed themselves of in 1859. Nor

could it be a matter of indifference to Germany to see the security of Austrian's western frontier lessened by an extension of the French boundaries, accruing upon Italian soil. The strength and safety of Austria are a necessity for Germany; no intelligent German politician could think with complacency of the situation that would accrue were Austria to be paralysed or hostile to us because she had been thrown over by Germany. We are convinced that the logic of history is itself strong enough to prove to these peace-loving Powers that they do well not to wait until their turn shall come, but to take every precaution against isolation in the peace question through allowing their colleagues to be injured."

People acquainted with the diplomatic tongue inferred very correctly from the above sentences that a Triple Alliance for the maintenance of peace—i.e. a defensive league between Italy and the Allied Empires in view of certain indicated potentialities—had been concluded; and there was reason to believe that it was several months old at the time when it came to be publicly discussed. If we read between the lines of the Berlin official paper, we find it expressing the conviction that any attempt on the part of the French to disturb the peace of Europe on France's eastern and south-eastern frontiers would be encountered by three Powers resolved to keep that peace. That part of the article in which the Chancellor expressed his apprehension lest monarchy might obtain victory over the present Constitution of France gave extraordinary offence to the French press. The *Temps*, at that time an official organ, wrote on the 8th April: "Merciful Heavens! what vulgar fellows these Germans are, and how little national dignity they possess! Probably the *Norddeutsche* fancies that it will gratify the supporters of our institutions by offering

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them its assistance. It would be difficult to exhibit a greater lack of tact. Is it, then, a matter of course that France should ask Germany's advice before deciding what she shall do at home—that her political parties should enquire how far they may go without drawing down the German Chancellor's remarks upon their heads? The *Norddeutsche* is quite right in saying that France does not exhibit any desire to break the peace; but it is gravely in error if it believes that all parties in France are not at one in the resolve to be masters in their own country, and to maintain the independence of the French nation."

Paul de Cassagnac, the clerical Bonapartist, bitterly lamented in the *Pays* that "It is the foreigner who watches over and supports the Republic in France. What a disgrace for the Republic! If we required any further proof how fatal the Republic is to us, we should find it in this German article, which so correctly explains the motives of the Triple Alliance formed against our unfortunate country!"

The Gambettist organ, *La République Française*, was quite beside itself, to the extent of becoming irefully sarcastic and regrettably personal, e.g.: "M. de Bismarck has rallied from the painful throes of his neuralgia or gout to dictate an article for the *Norddeutsche Zeitung*. He condescends to acquaint us with a fact which was never unknown to us, namely, that Germany, Austria and Italy have concluded an offensive alliance against us. He is so good as to admit that none of these Powers considers its tranquillity menaced by us. Is it possible to be more gracious? It is therefore certain that the *Fraeuleins* of Berlin and Vienna and the Roman *signorine* need not fear that General Gallifet will forthwith sound to boot and saddle on the Meuse or Var. The Spring of 1883 will not have to wrinkle its brows

over war-rumours. All renown to Prince Bismarck and his prophet the editor of the *Norddeutsche*, for having proclaimed this message to the universe! Our constitutional laws are quoted as the chief guarantee of European peace, and it is observed that nothing short of a cataclysm could revive our warlike dispositions, by bringing a man or principle to power, whose position would have to be strengthened by turning Frenchmen's attention to foreign matters. We are happy to inform M. de Bismarck that no man in the world is capable of dragging our nation into a war of conquest. (!) If he imagines that our existing institutions would cause us to hesitate if called upon to defend our rights and honour, he is most abominably misinformed. The Republic will attack nobody, but will know how to make itself respected by everybody. To recommend our form of government to European benevolence as the only preventative against the warlike proclivities of the nation, is to insult France as well as the Republic. There is no Frenchman, be he Republican or Monarchist, who does not feel this insult. We are not accustomed (!) to blame or praise the institutions of our neighbours. We do not side with either Herr von Bismarck or Herr Richter; we let the Germans, Austrians and Italians govern themselves as best pleases them. Watch us, if you like; conclude defensive alliances against us, if doing so strengthens your feeling of security. It is all one to us, for we shall require no allies when summoned to defend ourselves. But for Heaven's sake spare us your advice concerning the constitution best suited to us."

Did this "peaceful Republic" promise to be durable, it would be scarcely necessary to take any precautions against it. But we have reason to doubt its durability, firstly, on account of the French character, which loves change, and secondly, by reason of the very nature of a democratic

Republic, or Parliamentary Despotism, which hitherto—at least amongst peoples of Latin origin—has always sooner or later led to exaggerations of principle, thence to reaction, to a military *régime* and finally to an absolutist Monarchy. Provision has therefore been made for putting a stop to these extravagances, should the case in question accrue, bringing with it the necessity of war. France would then find herself faced to the south and east by a formidable Triple Alliance. It may perhaps be doubted that a written Treaty to this effect exists; but it is beyond a doubt that a clear understanding has been arrived at by the three Powers, in the sense that France shall not be able to attack any one of them without finding the two others arrayed in arms to resist her. This is the exact converse of the state of Europe during the reign of Napoleon III. He (unwisely enough in the interests of England, not of France) attacked Russia in the Crimea whilst Prussia remained inactive, and Austria was only able to lend him a half-hearted assistance. He made war upon Austria whilst Prussia and Russia "stood at ease." He fell upon Germany in 1870, who fought him unsupported. If the Republic be wise, it will not play the old game over again; nor, in all probability, will any Emperor or King of the French who may reveal himself as the outcome of the Republic. If France wants, as matters now stand, to pick a quarrel with one of her neighbours, she will have to fight three at once—an undertaking to which she will never be equal. She will scarcely be so insensate as to dash her head against the wall of a new Coalition which, unlike its predecessors, is and will most likely remain a purely defensive one.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHANCELLOR AND RUSSIA.

JUST before and immediately after the last Russo-Turkish war it was a standing allegation in the columns of the Muscovite Press that Prussia (and even all Germany), owed a debt of gratitude to Russia and was not inclined to pay it. A retrospective glance at the history of the last eighty years—that is, up to the date of Bismarck's accession to Ministerial office—will enable us to judge what is the exact state of our debt and credit account with that country, as far as thankfulness is concerned.

Stein, at the Vienna Congress, wished to ensure lasting peace and tranquillity to this quarter of the globe by arrangements calculated to augment Germany's strength and permanently consolidate it. A neighbour, however, who should be able to dispense with the patronage of Russia and to decline foreign interference in its affairs did not suit Czar Alexander's plans, and so he quashed Stein's projects by his veto. Prussia's indemnity-claims were at first supported by Russia; but when the latter had ascertained to a certainty that no one intended to interfere with her designs upon Poland, that the efforts of Austria and the Western Powers were exclusively directed against Prussia, and that peace could be preserved without any further sacrifice on Russia's part, the Czar and his advisers

cooled towards this country, and eventually required Frederick William III. in plain terms to forego certain claims which would have procured for Prussia far larger compensation than that with which she was compelled to content herself.

During the Russo-Turkish war of 1829 Prussia did good service to Russia, chiefly by General von Muefflings mission, which materially contributed to bring about the peace that extricated the Russians from grave embarrassment. In the Spring of 1830 Russia contracted an anti-German alliance with France, by which the latter was to acquire the left bank of the Rhine; nothing but the revolution of July prevented our two loyal neighbours' plan from being carried out.

The notorious "July Declaration" of 1848 reckoned amongst Russia's proofs of friendship for Germany, her readiness to stand by the latter against the projects Rhinewards disclosed by our Western neighbours in 1840. But Russia never even thought of arming at that time; and if she withstood Thiers' demonstrations by diplomatic action, it was only because she had reason to anticipate a national rising throughout Germany which would have endangered Russian influence in that country, whilst a *rapprochement* to France was in many respects desirable for the Muscovite Empire in 1840. Through the death of the Duke of Nassau an important point in Western Germany was left forlorn of relations to the Court of Petersburg, whose former connection with the Royal House of Wuertemberg had ceased to exist, whilst its relations with Baden were considerably slackened. A visit to London paid by Czar Nicholas had not produced the desired effect. In Russia itself there was trouble with the peasants and discontent in the highest circles; fresh conspiracies had been detected

in Poland; the Russian arms had made but little way in the Caucasus. English policy prevented the Russians from following up their advantage in Persia; the Quadruple Alliance hindered them from making any progress in Turkey; in the Balkan provinces Panslavism had begun to make a distinction between its relations to the Russian people and its attitude towards the despotic governing principles of the Czar. Under these circumstances Russia was bound to regain a firm footing in the West; and her best means of so doing was to contract an alliance with France. It was on the point of being concluded when the Revolution of February broke out, promptly to be followed by political storms in Germany and Austria.

Here we must interrupt our "statement of account" in order to interpolate a few facts required to make it comprehensible.

King Frederick William III. was a person of sober, mistrustful and highly critical disposition, tempered by a certain tenderness and sensibility which particularly expressed themselves in his relations to Czar Alexander I. On account of the vows of friendship exchanged between the Czar and himself by the grave of Frederick the Great during the lifetime of Queen Louise, and of the impressions made upon him throughout and after the War of Emancipation by his intercourse with his Russian fellow-monarch, he forgot all that had taken place at Tilsit, at Erfurt, and at the Congress of Vienna. He loved and honoured Alexander I. warmly and sincerely, and his affection influenced his foreign policy, even after the Czar's death, for he continued it to his deceased friend's successor, who, moreover, had espoused his daughter, the Princess Charlotte of Prussia. There were also sentimental traits in the character of Alexander I., but they lacked depth, and never

induced him to lose sight of his own interests. His feelings were changeful and contradictory; in reality, he was false to the core; consequently his friendship to the Prussian King was wanting in consistency, and much more a matter of calculation than of sentiment; frequently a self-delusion, still oftener a comedy performed with the intention to work upon the King's feelings or to tempt him, and always imbued with a sense of patronage. Czar Nicholas was a man of another kidney; but although, during his father-in-law's life, he subdued his pride in deference to the latter's age, he always knew how to manage matters so that the advantages of the good relations prevailing between himself and the Prussian Court were invariably more remunerative to Russia than to Prussia. The camp at Kalisch was a mere spectacle, calculated to display Russia's power in the East rather than her friendship to Prussia. The restraints imposed upon the Prussian press were dictated by consideration for wishes expressed on the banks of the Neva. It repeatedly occurred that Russia conducted her transactions with the minor German Courts in such sort as to prejudice Prussian interests. The Russian tariffs of 1830 inflicted very serious injury upon Prussia's eastern provinces. The King, however, appeared to consider all this perfectly natural, and to fall in with the Czar's pretensions to any extent. The circumstance that he entertained no Liberal predilections, and had no thought of extending Prussia's sphere of power in Germany contributed to the maintenance of his warm friendship with Russia. A change supervened upon the accession to the throne in 1840 of Frederick William IV. who *did* entertain Liberal predilections, and in whose mind constantly hovered a notion of some sort of German unification under Prussian leadership, which was as repugnant to his Imperial brother-

in-law (who meanwhile, upon the ground of his successes in Turkey and Poland, had persuaded himself that he was the chief guardian of order upon the European Continent) as were the King's very moderate Constitutional tendencies. "My brother-in-law in Berlin will come to grief," Czar Nicholas prophesied in 1841; and seven years later he declared; "I will not have any Constitutional Assemblies on my skirts at Berlin and Vienna." In 1848 he seems to have seriously thought of bringing about a counter-Revolution in Prussia by the agency of Russian troops. He was just as strongly opposed to the establishment of intimate relations between Prussia and the petty German States as he was to the awakening of Constitutional life in Prussia. It was due to Russian threats that, in the first Schleswig-Holstein War, the Prussian troops were withdrawn from Juetland and the armistice of Malmoe was concluded. Russia laboured quite as eagerly as England to produce a state of affairs which subsequently received sanction from the London Protocol. In May 1849, the Czar, in an autographic letter, declared himself opposed to Prussia's endeavours to obtain the consent of the German Sovereigns to proceed to the election of an Emperor at Frankfort; and, during the following autumn, he informed the Cabinet of Berlin that he should regard any reconstruction of the German Constitution, undertaken without Austria's co-operation, as a violation of the 1815 Treaties, and should treat it as such. Finally (Oct. 26, 1850), the Czar—who had by that time come to the front as Europe's only arbitrator, but had ineffectually striven to convert his Royal kinsman to the Union policy—spoke to the Prussian Plenipotentaries in such terms about German affairs and the aspirations of Prussia that the dismal journey to Olmuetz came to be regarded in Berlin as inevitable. He

talked about "bandits, who constituted his brother-in-law's *entourage*," and said that the Hessians (who, faithful to their Constitution, had been taken under Prussia's protection) "ought to be cut to pieces, as all rebels deserved to be."

During the Crimean war Austria—only five years previously supported and rescued from destruction by Russian arms—lent her aid, to the utmost of her ability, to Russia's adversaries; whilst Prussia—despite the evil usage she had had from Nicholas in 1848–50—observed a benevolent neutrality. This was a great advantage to Russia, although as a policy, it was not dictated by any liking for her; for, as we have seen in Chapter V., Prussian policy was then already influenced by a statesman whose actions were not prompted by sentimental impulse but by regard for the interests of his country. He has declared as much in public; i.e. in the Reichstag on February 19th, 1878. "I was," he observed, "not a Minister at the time; but, owing to the confidence reposed in me by the late King Frederick William IV., I was enabled to take part in the more important and momentous questions then pending, and I know exactly what happened. I know what persuasions and threats were brought to bear upon Prussia to drive us like bloodhounds into a foreign war; and it was only the King's personal resistance that prevented us from committing the grave error of engaging in a struggle which would have become exclusively our own as soon as we should have fired the first shot, whilst those associated with us would have been relieved of their embarrassments, and would have told us to stop fighting as soon as they should have had enough of it. Ought we not to be thankful that we then withstood the temptation of forbidding Russia to make war, or even of enhancing her difficulties:" Russia had good reason to deem herself

fortunate that the Cabinet of Berlin observed the attitude above indicated; but she in no way acknowledged her obligation, if even she felt it—which may be doubted, for a Russian official pamphlet, "La Politique du Présent," published in 1864, stated that "Germany throughout the War in the East, had not been able to withstand the pressure of the Western Powers, and had left Russia in the lurch." As a matter of fact the Russians were not content with friendly services on our part, compatible with the safeguarding of Germany's interests; what they expected from us was slavish devotion at no matter what risk to ourselves.

This feeling still prevailed throughout Russian high society when Bismarck took up his appointment as Prussia's representative at the Court of Petersburg, where Prussian Envoys had theretofore not occupied a very distinguished position. Nothing but the relationship between their Sovereign and the Czar (which entitled them to admission to the Imperial family circle) raised them in any respect above the standing held by the diplomatic representatives of the German petty States. Under the reign of Czar Nicholas they did not rank as Intermediaries between the Russian Cabinet and that of a State equal to Russia in dignity, but as friendly servants of the Imperial House—a position which, owing to the masterful nature of the Muscovite Monarch, was often far from an agreeable one. Under Czar Alexander it was so far modified that the Prussian Plenipotentiary was no longer exposed to haughty and insulting treatment. But a fundamental alteration only accrued after Bismarck had presented his credentials to the Czar, to whom he came with excellent recommendations as an admirer of the late Emperor, and as an opponent to Berlin anti-Russian Liberalism and to Austria's policy at

Frankfort. The Russian Court was favourably predisposed towards him; and within a few weeks of his arrival at Petersburg he had won all hearts by his pleasant, easy manner, unpretentious distinction, frankness and sparkling wit. In "New Sketches of Petersburg Society," it is said of him:—"Here, at last, was a German with whom we could associate as easily and pleasantly as with other people; who gave himself the rein, being certain of his ability to pull himself up; who dictated the tone to society instead of mimicking it; who had self respect enough never to bore himself or others with superfluous pretensions. Our overweening aristocracy, accustomed to look down upon everything German, and to consider itself superior to all others, joyfully recognised him as one of its own caste. M. de Bismarck maintained unaltered the confidential relations to the Imperial Family enjoyed by his predecessors, freeing them, however, from all *inconvénients* as far as he was concerned, and establishing himself on the same footing as that occupied by the Ambassadors of the Great Powers. He was at once an Imperial family-friend and the representative of a powerful, independent State whose dignity could not be sacrificed under any circumstances whatsoever. Everybody knew that the Prussian Envoy was unable to compete with his French, English, and Austrian colleagues in splendour and display; but this drawback could not have been more happily and gracefully dealt with than it was by M. and Mme. de Bismarck. The little dinners and evening receptions at their house soon became more sought after than the wearisome *fêtes* with which other diplomatists ruined themselves; and the most exacting critics were obliged to confess that no embassy entertained so agreeably as the Legation in the Stenbock Palace. As we had theretofore had to do with German statesmen who either repudiated

their national morals and language in favour of French manners and speech, or else were obtrusively and fulsomely ultra-German in their behaviour, we welcomed in M. de Bismarck a diplomatist who combined the Prussian-German, proud of his country, with the gentleman in a natural and elegant manner that was admirably suitable to the forms of intercourse obtaining in Court and Diplomatic circles."

When Bismarck quitted Petersburg, after a three years' sojourn there, everybody belonging to the Russian Court agreed that he was destined to play an important part in the history of the Fatherland; and, perhaps unconsciously, he had accustomed the Russians to the notion that a mighty Prussia, emancipate from the influence of Petersburg, might prove a valuable friend and ally to her eastern neighbour. Soon afterwards events occurred eminently calculated to strengthen that impression.

On October 8th, 1862, Bismarck assumed the presidency of the Prussian State Ministry. He attempted and failed to persuade the opposition in the Diet to take a reasonable view of affairs. The Russian Press which had sprung up under the Liberal *régime* of Alexander II. took part (in common with the majority of German newspapers) against the "reactionary Junker in the Wilhelmstrasse" during the first few months of the Constitutional Conflict. Then—in January 1863—broke out the great insurrection in Poland, which held Russia breathless for several months, and overwhelmed the Czar's government with diplomatic and military embarrassments. The Western Powers were favourably disposed towards the insurgents; the Cabinet of Vienna seemed inclined to assist them; the Party of Progress in the Prussian Diet, as well as the Liberals throughout Europe, eagerly adopted their cause. Bismarck however, was not led astray; he forthwith made proposals

at Petersburg for common action against the revolution, and (even when the danger threatening Prussian provinces was averted by the proclamation of the Revolutionary Central Committee in Warsaw, to the effect that the exclusive object of the rising was to vanquish the "Moscow Czar, Poland's terrible hereditary foe," and effect the emancipation of Russian Poland) he persevered in the negotiations which led to the well-known Frontier-Convention of February, 1863. The attacks made upon him by the Opposition in the Lower House when this Convention was published were vexatious, but unimportant. Not so the probability that France would summon Prussia before the judgment-seat of Europe, to answer for her assistance to Russia in this matter. Drouyn de l'Huys wrote (February 17) to the French Envoy at Berlin:—"As Prussia mixes herself up more or less directly in the conflict she not only assumes responsibility for the repressive measures taken by Russia but suggests solidarity between the populations of the different parts of Poland—in a word, that the insurrection is a really national one." Four days later the French Government invited the Cabinets of London and Vienna to join it in taking steps at Berlin; and, although that proposal came to nothing, Bismarck's position became unpleasant, as he found it necessary to refrain from formally carrying out the Convention.

Nevertheless, the February Convention was of material assistance to Russia. In the first place it made a deep impression upon the Russian public, which was somewhat doubtful about the insurrection at the outset, but gave its unqualified support to the Government as soon as the Convention was made known. From that moment, also, the authorities took up a firm position, and the philo-Polish party in Russian upper circles of society lost ground. Besides this moral sustention material aid was promptly forth-

coming. The strictness with which Prussia kept guard upon the western frontier of Russian Poland relieved the Czar's forces of half their work, and enabled them to concentrate their attention upon the southern part of the province, as well as to overpower the bands of insurgents cropping up here and there in the northern and north-western districts with scarcely any effort.

Prussia's behaviour throughout the Polish insurrection gave general satisfaction in Russia at the time, and resulted in achieving Bismarck's chief object, viz.: that Prussia's great Eastern neighbour should look with a favourable eye upon his future undertakings in Germany. In certain strata of Russian society these undertakings were disapproved of and even denounced; but, judging by Russia's behaviour from 1864 to 1871, there must have been a powerful party at the Court of Petersburg which disbelieved in the expediency of an anti-Prussian policy. Doubtless Czar Alexander remained under the impression made upon him by Bismarck personally and by the 1863 Convention. We may assume that the German statesman was well aware of this fact, and that he utilised it to reassure the Czar (who was moreover, strongly influenced by his relationship and especial attachment to his venerable uncle at Berlin) with respect to the extent of his (Bismarck's) projected enterprises, to hold out prospects of advantage to him, and thus to enlist him durably in the cause of Prussian interests.

When—during the Danish War—an entreaty for help was transmitted from Copenhagen to France, England and Russia, and the British Ambassador at Petersburg asked Gortchakoff (Feb. 16, 1864) what Russia meant to do in the matter, he received an evasive answer, to the effect that the Imperial Cabinet had no doubt the question would be peacefully solved; that it could not assist the Danes

materially, but would lend them its moral support; that it could not investigate mere rumours concerning secret projects alleged to be entertained by Prussia and Austria; and that the best thing to do would be to convoke a Conference. When Prussia (May 15) repudiated the London Protocol, Russia did not protest, but let that Convention drop, and declared herself ready to forego her own claims upon Holstein and Oldenburg. Later on, 1866, when the Austro-Prussian war was on the point of breaking out, Benedetti wrote (April 10) to Drouyn de l'Huys: "Whilst upon the subject of Russia, permit me to remark that for a long time past I have observed, not without astonishment, the indifference displayed by Russia from the very first to Prussia's pretensions and to the probability of a collision between the two German Powers, as well as the confidence evinced by M. de Bismarck with respect to the attitude and intentions of the Northern Empire." As the dangers of war became more imminent the Czar put forward representations in favour of peace at Vienna and Berlin alike, but without attempting any interference in the questions at issue. Russia subsequently joined France and England in inviting Prussia and Austria to attend a Conference in Paris for the purpose of arranging their differences; but Vienna advanced stipulations that were inadmissible, and the war commenced. Whilst it was still going on, early in August, the King's General aide-de-camp, von Manteuffel, went to Petersburg on a special mission, with the object of confidentially explaining the Prussian Government's views and resolves to the Czar, in relation to certain Princely Houses in Germany with which His Russian Majesty was connected by family ties. His explanations must have proved satisfactory; for Russia offered no opposition to the settlement of German affairs subsequently effected by Prussia. For

this Germany is certainly indebted to her. But it was by no means exclusively owing to her goodwill towards Prussia that Russia "stood at ease," watching the course of events and leaving unutilized the opportunity presented to her for attacking Germany. Prussia was regarded by her as "the avenging instrument of Russian wrath," which Austria had drawn down upon herself by her "ungrateful conduct" during the Crimean War and Polish Insurrection. Secondly, Russia regarded Austrian hegemony in Germany as an eventuality far less advantageous to her interests than the unification of Germany under Prussian leadership.

The same motives inspired Russia's attitude throughout the Franco-German War. But there were others as well. She could not, in 1870, possibly tolerate that Austria-Hungary should participate in the subjugation of Germany, and that a Franco-Austrian army should approach the frontiers of Poland—a country traditionally favoured by France and, of late years, by Austria, always, of course, at the expense of Russia. The Muscovite Government, moreover, hoped that the war would paralyse France, whereby Gortchakoff would be enabled to shake off the fetters of the 1856 Paris Treaty. It did not, however, reckon upon the utter defeat of France that ensued. The Emperor Alexander was influenced by his regard for his Royal uncle and his dislike for Napoleon; and if Prussia had to thank Russia for her behaviour at that time, she cleared off her obligation by recovering, in 1871, for Russia the right to navigate the Black Sea, which, but for Bismarck's intermediatory efforts, France and England would not have granted.

The transaction in question took the following course. Prince Gortchakoff instructed the Russian Agents abroad (Oct. 19, 1870) to inform the respective foreign governments

that the Czar of all the Russias declined to be bound any longer by the Treaty of 1856, as far as its stipulations restricted his sovereign rights in the Black Sea; that he proposed to revoke his special Convention with the Sultan respecting the number and size of their respective warships in those waters, and to resume possession of all his rights in the same. The English Government, according to Granville's Circular Despatch of Nov. 10, regarded this declaration with "deep regret" as "an arbitrary repudiation of a solemn engagement" to which England "could not possibly give her sanction." Count Beust also (*vide* his Despatch of Nov. 16) was "painfully affected" by Russia's behaviour, and found it "impossible to conceal his extreme astonishment thereat."

How the German Chancellor dealt with the question may be gathered from some remarks he made in private at Versailles (Nov. 17). Having read over Granville's despatch, which had arrived on the previous day, he observed, with a laugh: "Future complications! Parliamentary orators! They have no confidence in themselves. The word future is strongly accented. That is the way people talk when they mean to do nothing. No; there is nothing to fear from *them* (the English), just as, four months ago, there was nothing to be hoped from them. Gortchakoff in this matter is not pursuing the true Russian policy; he is acting like a Varangian, impetuously and violently. It has always been imagined that Russian policy is exceptionally cunning and subtle, full of windings, traps, and dodges; but it is nothing of the kind. If the Russians were dishonest fellows they would forbear from making declarations of this kind, quietly build their men-of-war in the Black Sea, and wait till they were questioned on the subject, then replying that they knew nothing about it; and spin the thing

out in that way till at last people would get accustomed to it."

On Nov. 22, the Chancellor had an interview of three hours' duration with Odo Russell, England's representative at German Headquarters in Versailles, the result of which was that he empowered that gentleman to inform his Government that the Russian Circular had surprised him, (Bismarck); that, although he had been of opinion at the time that the Treaty of 1856 was unjustifiably oppressive to Russia, he could not excuse Russia's present conduct or choice of a moment whereat to extort a revision of the Treaty; that he regretted his inability, on account of the actual war, to interfere in the matter or even to answer the Russian Circular; and that he should recommend a Conference at Constantinople, with the object of averting the outbreak of another war. During a second conversation with Russell the Chancellor indicated Petersburg as still more suitable to the Conference, as the presence there of Czar Alexander would facilitate an understanding. When Granville objected to Petersburg, Bismarck proposed London, to which Gortchakoff consented. After several postponements the Conference met on Jan. 17, 1871. The Representative of the North German Confederation forthwith took occasion to state that his Government had proposed a Conference for purposes of conciliation, equity and peace. With those objects still in view he was instructed to recommend to earnest consideration Russia's desire for the alteration of those clauses of the Paris Treaty which affected the neighbourly relations of the two riparian Powers on the Euxine. After some discussion Granville declared his readiness to sign a Convention in the sense of Russia's wishes, provided that equivalents for the Neutrality Clauses should be forthcoming. The Representatives of

Austria and the Porte endorsed this declaration, and ultimately an understanding satisfactory to all parties was arrived at, which found expression in the two first Articles of the Treaty of March 13, 1871.

The Russian press was all but unanimously unfavourable to the unification of Germany by Prussia, and therein faithfully reflected public opinion, which regarded the concentration of Germany's peoples into one mighty force as seriously injurious to Russian interests. Nearly all the Russian newspapers complained that the Germans kept their eyes greedily riveted upon Russia's Baltic Provinces. General Fadejeff, in his book "Russia's Fighting-Strength" designated Prussia as "a historical accident," and stated that "the disastrous consequences of the European cataclysm of 1866 weighed upon Russia alone." When the Franco-German War broke out all the Russian press-organs except the *Journal de St. Petersburg* took part with France, and stuck to that line throughout the whole campaign, in direct opposition to their government's attitude. Even after peace had been concluded, and after the signature of the London Protocol, which gave the Russians free elbow-room in the Black Sea once more, the leading Russian journals kept up their anti-German demonstrations, and reproduced every lie to Germany's prejudice that was invented by Austrian Federalists, Belgium Clericalists, French Radicals and Italian Mazzinians.

The politicians of Petersburg had long and vainly sought for an ally, who (in exchange for the privilege of doing as he pleased in Western Europe) should enable them to realise their plans in the East. This ally they believed they had found at last in New Germany, which they therefore strove to attach to Russia and to estrange from Austria—who, for her part, was still sulking over her 1866

reverses. They proposed, indeed, to divide the Danubian Realm between the two Allies, Russia's share being the predominantly Slav provinces, and indirectly at a later date, the Turkish Balkan territories. Prince Bismarck, however, was by no means disposed to fall in with this arrangement. He perceived clearly that Germany would not gain by further territorial aggrandisement, but by the maintenance of peace, to which end the first thing needful was to reconcile Germany with Austria, and the second, to bring about friendly relations between Austria and Russia. Consequently he set on foot the negotiations that led to the Imperial Triple Alliance of 1872. Gortchakoff agreed to Bismarcks' proposals, but with the *arrière pensée* that as soon as Russia's Oriental projects should be ripe, Germany would lend herself to their furtherance. Those plans might have taken a considerable time to mature had not the rapid spread and heat of the Panslavistic agitation, as well as Gortchakoff's craving to achieve popularity and appear to the world at large as a star of the first magnitude upon the political firmament, hastened the march of events.

The precursory symptoms of a renewed Russian attack upon Turkey made themselves manifest in 1875 in the Herzegovina, and soon assumed a serious character calling for diplomatic action in order to avert a general war. In December, 1875, the three Eastern Powers came to an understanding anent a programme of reform for the Ottoman Empire on the basis of placing the Christian religion *de jure* and *de facto* upon an absolute equality with Islam. This programme was communicated to the other Great Powers by Count Andrassy in a Note, dated Dec. 30, 1875. In May, 1876, the Czar came to Berlin, and Bismarck, Gortchakoff and Andrassy held consultations upon the

question; the chief object in view being that the two last-named statesmen should come to terms, wherefore Germany's representative declared himself only prepared to give his moral support to the contemplated arrangements, as they would concern Germany indirectly. The result of these negotiations was the Berlin Memorandum of May 13, proposing that Europe should endeavour to bring about an understanding between the Porte and the insurgents, and recommending two months' armistice. The Memorandum was accepted by France and Italy, but rejected by England. However, it had led—as Andrassy informed the Austro-Hungarian Delegations (May 18, 1876)—to "complete unanimity of the Three Powers in the matter at issue, and to a resolve on their part to renew their present agreement from time to time."

From the 14th to the 18th of June the German and Russian Emperors were together at Ems, the Czar and Francis Joseph having previously met (June 8) at Reichstadt; and the result of these meetings was a resolve that the three Powers should refrain from intervention. Thus the danger that war might overstep the boundaries thitherto confining it seemed to be averted; but this hope was speedily put an end to by the sanguinary suppression of the Bulgarian insurrection, and by Servia's rebellion against Turkey. During the autumn darkness obscured the horizon in south-eastern Europe. The Servians were repeatedly and thoroughly thrashed by the Turks. A conference, with the object of averting further bloodshed in the Balkan Peninsula, was arranged to be held at Constantinople; but the Porte objected to some of the concessions exacted from it, and so the conference was put off. Russia then began to arm, and on Oct. 31, her representative at Stamboul handed in an Ultimatum to the effect that the Czar could

no longer tolerate Turkish operations in Servia, but must insist upon an effective and unconditional armistice; otherwise, the Russian Embassy would quit Constantinople. Soon afterwards Czar Alexander stated to Lord Augustus Loftus at Livadia, that "the Porte, by a series of manœuvres, had frustrated all Europe's efforts to terminate the war and secure general peace; and that, if the other Powers chose to put up with such behaviour, he could not reconcile it with Russia's honour, dignity and interests to do so any longer." At the same time he pledged his word of honour that he had no design upon Constantinople, and that, should he find it necessary to occupy Bulgaria, he would only hold it until the conclusion of peace. Meanwhile he had caused the proposal to be made to England that Austria should occupy Bosnia, Russia could hold Bulgaria, and a Naval Demonstration should take place at Constantinople, in which England should play the leading part. The Czar then summed up his demands as follows: an armistice; immediate convocation of a Conference to introduce reforms in three Turkish provinces for the benefit of their Christian populations; material guarantees from Turkey that those reforms should be carried out.

The German Chancellor's attitude towards the whole affair may be gathered from some observations addressed by him to his guests at a dinner he gave on Dec. 1, to the President of the Reichstag, i.e., "Germany's duty *avant tout*, is to keep the peace, which need not yet be despaired of. If war should supervene, which seems probable, Russia and Turkey will get tired of it in time, and Germany will then be more likely to mediate successfully than she is now. It would be inexpedient to give Russia advice just at present. Such a step would put the Russian nation out of temper, which would be more prejudicial to us than a passing

difference with any Government. It is unlikely that England will go to war with Russia." He expressed sincere sympathy for Austria, observing that should she be compelled to fight in defence of her territory it would devolve upon Germany to take her part—and, indeed, to stand up for the map of Europe, as then defined. Germany would prove her absolute disinterestedness. Besides, Austria possessed greater vitality than people imagined, as he had told Lord Salisbury a few days previously, and would be made manifest if the Emperor Francis Joseph should take occasion to appeal personally to his peoples.

During the Reichstag Debate of Dec. 5, Prince Bismarck, in reply to an interpellation of Eugene Richter, explained at some length his view of the situation and of Germany's interests and duties in connection with it. He said, *inter alia*: 'If, at an ill-timed moment, you put a spoke in the wheel of a Power which happens to be in difficulties, it is quite possible that you may upset the coach; but the driver will have noticed who it was that inserted the spoke. The previous speaker, like many other people, labours under the error that Russia is just now soliciting great favours and services at our hands. That is by no means the case. He has hinted that Russia is bent upon conquest and territorial annexations. We have the Emperor Alexander's solemn assurance that he will refrain from the one and the other. Russia asks us for nothing that we can bargain about; she only seeks our co-operation in a peaceable Conference with an object which is ours as well as hers, namely, the safeguarding of the Porte's Christian subjects against treatment which is incompatible with existing European legal conditions, and upon the abolition of which Europe is entirely at one, although she has not yet hit upon the right way of giving effect to her unanimity. It would appear that, should the

Conference prove fruitless, Russia will very shortly proceed on her own account to obtain by force that which the Porte refuses to concede peaceably. Even in that case Russia asks nothing from us but neutrality, which it is in our interest to observe. We cannot possibly send our troops to the Russian frontier at a moment in which Russia is putting forth her strength in a cause common to us both. Some of our political parties are hostile to Russia by habit, inheritance and tradition (the Progressists); others, because the Russian form of government does not suit their confessional interests (the Clericalists). But, whatever these gentlemen may think, say, or do, I can assure them that as long as I stand upon this floor they shall not succeed in breaking up our good, intimate and solid relations to Russia. Those who yearn to see those relations destroyed are very far from the realisation of their wishes; for the League uniting the three Emperors for a long time to come is in full force; and I can tell them, moreover, that no clouds whatsoever intervene between Russia and Austria. . . It would be erroneous to infer that the Imperial Triple Alliance is adverse to England, with whom, as well as with Russia, our relations have been cordial for a century past. . . . I shall not advise our participation in the war as long as no German interest shall be called in question that may be considered worth the healthy bones of a single Pomeranian musketeer. . . . We have as little to do with the matter as France. This cannot be said of the other Powers, inasmuch as circumstances may accrue that will convert Turkish interests into Austrian, English or Russian interests. My duty, as prescribed to me by His Majesty the Emperor, is, to take such diplomatic action as may preserve our relations with the three Powers concerned in this struggle undisturbed or as little disturbed as may be. This duty would be

rendered extremely difficult were any one of our foreign friends to ask us to prove our amity towards him by dealing inimically with another of our friends, who has done nothing to us, and asks no better than to retain our friendship. But I do not believe that any such request will be addressed to us. . . . We shall endeavour, in the first place, to maintain peace and friendship with those who have hitherto been our friends, and, in the second, to keep the peace between the European Powers by localising the war, should it break out in the East. Should we be unsuccessful, a new situation will present itself, respecting which I cannot indulge in any conjectures, nor will you at this moment ask me for any information."

That situation was destined to accrue speedily. Meanwhile efforts were made in different quarters to divert the Chancellor from his prudential policy. In January, 1877, the *Times* exhorted him to insist upon the maintenance of peace, and a little later addressed an entreaty, in the same sense, to the Emperor William. In April, when Bismarck had asked His Majesty's leave to retire from office, the *Czas* (a journal generally kept well informed upon occurrences in Court circles and high society by its patrons, the Radziwills, Czartoryskis, &c.) announced that Queen Victoria, a short time previously, had written direct to Bismarck, urging him to protest against an attack upon Turkey by Russia, and had received an evasive answer; that Her Britannic Majesty, thereupon, had addressed a second letter to the Chancellor on the same subject, couched in still more pressing terms, to which a more definite reply had been returned. This reply not proving satisfactory to the Queen, she had then (according to the Polish journal) written to the Emperor, holding him and Germany responsible for the coming war.

We have reason to believe in the trustworthiness of the above report; and we may add that this most extraordinary request—viz.: that, without being called upon to do so by our own circumstances and requirements, but simply to oblige England and prevent her from over-exciting herself on behalf of her commercial and political interests on the Bosphorus, we should compel our Russian neighbour to keep quiet—was also otherwise conveyed (in a manner that may easily be divined by any one acquainted with the leading personages of the Prussian Court) to the King, who, being by nature of a peaceable disposition and animated by the sincere desire to avert new wars from his people, might have been inclined to give ear to wishes and counsels calculated (in the opinion of those proffering them) to serve the cause of peace. Such counsels, however, unless inspired by a lofty intelligence and keen perception of all the actualities and potentialities of the case they refer to, may readily lead to war. Supposing the Emperor and his Chancellor had allowed these London letters to determine their conduct; that Germany had put her foot down and ordained peace; and that Russia, disregarding Germany's commands, had given her troops the order to march. What would have happened then? Either we should have been compelled, in order to enforce peace, to undertake a dangerous war—in which, even if we proved victorious, we shall have had to sacrifice our blood and treasure for England—or Germany's commands, unsupported by action, would only have demonstrated her impotence to encounter Russia. In the latter case we should have suffered crushing humiliation, and all to serve the interests of a Power which has never sincerely wished the Germans well, and most assuredly only tolerates their actual European importance because it may possibly be

utilised to further the objects of England's shopkeeping policy.

The Conferences, which lasted from December 23, 1876, to January 20, 1877, led to no result, because Turkey felt unable to accede to the demands addressed to her by all the other Powers. Thereupon the Cabinet of Petersburg issued the following circular:—"The refusal of the Turkish Government touches Europe in her honour and peace. It is our desire to learn the intentions of the Cabinets with which we have hitherto co-operated, in order to reply to that refusal and to ensure the fulfilment of their will." General Ignatieff's journey to Berlin, Paris, and London gave occasion to further confidential negotiations, throughout which the German Government sought to preserve a good understanding amongst the Powers (particularly between Russia and England), and which resulted in a Final Protocol, embodying the demands upon Turkey agreed upon by the Christian Powers at Constantinople. This Protocol was imparted to the Porte as the expression of Europe's collective requirement; it was abruptly rejected by Turkey, and forthwith the Czar declared war upon the Sultan. On April 24 his troops crossed the Turkish frontiers, and a campaign commenced, at first teeming with disasters and defeats to the Russians, but subsequently effecting the all but total annihilation of the Turkish forces, and terminating (February, 1878) by bringing a Russian army to the very gates of Constantinople. An armistice ensued, after Russia had coerced the Porte into accepting the extremely unfavourable peace preliminaries of San Stefano. England brought up her fleet to within sight of that place; and a collision of the two Powers appeared almost inevitable. Austria invited the Powers to a Conference in Vienna, with the object of ascertaining "the

unanimous view of Europe respecting the alterations in the Treaties of 1856 and 1871 that might be rendered necessary by the conditions of the peace to be concluded between Russia and Turkey."

About that time (February 19), in reply to an interpellation of the combined Liberal and Conservative parties in the Reichstag, the Chancellor gave utterance to his views on the situation, somewhat to the following effect: "The establishment of Bulgaria, its division into two provinces, and the independence of Montenegro, Servia, and Roumania do not affect German interests sufficiently to justify us in risking our relations with our neighbours upon their account . . . . I consider the question whether or not men-of-war shall pass through the Dardanelles in peace-time not altogether unimportant; but certainly not worth setting Europe in flames about . . . That the Dardanelles should pass into fresh hands is quite another thing—an eventuality and conjuncture with which, in my opinion, the actual situation has nothing to do . . . Our paramount interest in the East is that the waterways—not only the Straits, but Danube, from the Black Sea upwards—should remain free, which is certain enough . . . The Christian peoples in Turkey will be better governed than heretofore, and this is also Germany's interest; a secondary one, of course, but dictated by humanity . . . Russian politicians say, 'We don't want to be exposed every ten or twenty years to the necessity of a Turkish campaign;' but neither do they wish to substitute for that calamity a periodically recurring quarrel with Austria and England. It is Russia's interest to settle matters now, instead of putting off her arrangements to a later day, perhaps more inconvenient than the present one. I do not believe that Russia is inclined to fight the other Powers in order to obtain their recognition

of her conquests. The question is, are the dissatisfied Powers prepared to compel Russia to give up part of what she has gained? Were they to succeed in doing so the responsibility would devolve upon them of settling what is to be done with these provinces of European Turkey, which will not, in all probability, be restored to the Ottoman Empire; nor is it likely that Austria-Hungary, considering the number of her own Slav subjects, would desire to take over the entire heritage of recent Russian conquest, and become responsible for the future of these Slavonic countries by annexing them to Hungary, or ruling them as vassal-states."

"The choice of place for the Conference was indifferent to us; all I said about it was that if it took place on German soil, it would have to be presided over by a German . . . We have been told by different people that we ought to define our policy beforehand and impose it upon the others in one way or another. I think that would be press policy, not State policy. Supposing we were to proclaim a fixed programme, officially pledging ourselves to adhere to it; we should set a premium upon its intolerableness to all those who might be favourably disposed towards it, and should render our mediatory rôle at the Conference, upon which I set the very greatest value, almost impossible; for every one, with the German *menu* in his hand, would be enabled to say to us:—'Germany can go thus far and no further; she can do this thing, but she cannot do that' . . . I don't picture to myself a peace-mediator playing the part of an arbitrator, and saying, 'It must be so, or so, and behind me stands the whole might of Germany;' but a more modest one, something like that of an honest broker, who really wants to transact business. We are in the position to save any Power, entertaining secret wishes, from the

embarrassment of encountering refusal or even a disagreeable rejoinder from its opponent in the Congress. If we are equally friendly with both, we can first sound one, and then tell the other, 'Don't do this or that, but try to manage it thus!' I have many years' experience in these matters, and have often observed that in discussions between two people the thread is frequently dropped, and each party is ashamed to pick it up. If a third party be present he can do so without hesitation, and even bring the other two together again, if they have parted ill-humouredly. That is the part I want to play; it tallies with our friendly relations to our two frontier-neighbours and to England, with whom we have no difference beyond trifling and transitory ones, connected with trade rivalry—not such as could possibly bring two industrious and peace-loving nations into hostile collision—so that I flatter myself we can just as well play the mediator between England and Russia as I am sure we can between Russia and Austria . . . In differences between the latter Powers we have always avoided forming a majority of two to one by taking part for either, even when we have inclined more to the one side than to the other; fearing that our influence might not be strong enough to induce one of the said Powers to forego its indisputable national interests in order to oblige us. That is a sacrifice which no State will make *pour les beaux yeux d'un autre;* but only when the strength of that other is hinted at. Then such a State may say to itself, 'it is extremely disagreeable to have to make this concession, but still more so to quarrel with such a great Power as Germany; but I will make a note of the circumstance and keep it in mind.' I do not think we ought to follow the Napoleonic course of setting up as the schoolmaster, if not the arbitrator of Europe . . . I have no doubt that Russia

will sacrifice to the peace of Europe whatever may be compatible with her national feeling and with the interests of eighty millions of Russians; but were we to inform her, in the politest and friendliest manner, that although we have been in amity with her for a century, and she stood by us when we were in trouble, we have become a sort of policeman in Europe, and can no longer allow this European claim to be disregarded, there are influential parties in Russia which are not fond of Germany (fortunately they are not in power, though they would dearly like to be so), and what would they say to their fellow-countrymen in such a case? They would say: 'With what a sacrifice of blood, human life and treasure did we attain the position that has been the ideal of Russian ambition for centuries past? We were able to keep it against those whose interest it was to eject us from it. It was not Austria—with whom we have long been on only moderately intimate terms—nor England, whose interests were manifestly opposed to ours, but our close friend, from whom we had reason to expect service for service, Germany, who has no interests in the East—it was she who brandished the dagger, not the sword, behind our backs.' We will never assume the responsibility of sacrificing the sure and approved friendship of a great and mighty neighbour to the whim of playing the part of a judge in Europe. To risk the amity of one friend in order to please another in connection with questions in which we Germans are not directly interested—to purchase the peace of others with our own—well, I might do it were I myself alone imperilled by such a proceeding; but, having to direct the policy of a realm situate in the centre of Europe and containing 40,000,000 inhabitants, I cannot do it, and make a point of publicly stating, here, in this House, that nothing will induce me to do it."

In the course of the debate Deputy Windhorst had spoken against the Chancellor's policy, and had expressed the wish that Bismarck's "ingenuity might succeed in preserving the general peace, and also in making sure that German interests should not come off second best in the transaction. German interests, however, meant Austrian interests." Bismarck replied:—"I can assure this gentleman that he has no occasion to represent the interests of Austria, as far as we are concerned. Our relations to Austria are characterised by frankness and mutual confidence; which is a remarkable fact, considering what took place in former times, when other political parties were more powerful in Austria than they are now. This is not only the case between the two Monarchs and the two Governments; no, I am glad and proud to say that my personal relations to Count Andrassy are of so friendly a character as to permit him to put any question openly to me, in the interest of Austria, and to feel as certain that I will answer it truthfully as I do that he tells me nothing but the truth with respect to Austria's intentions. . . . . In former times, which probably suited the previous speaker better than these, it was otherwise. Then I had Austrian colleagues at the Confederation to whom I said: 'It is all the same to me whether you are speaking or the wind is whistling in the chimney-pots, for I don't believe a single word you say.' But Count Andrassy believes me and I believe him; and we do not in the least require any intermediation in our relations on the part of the previous speaker; the only thing he could do would be to spoil them."

On March 7, 1878, Austria proposed to the Great Powers that they should send their respective Prime-Ministers to a Congress, to take place at Berlin. Objections were raised

thereto on the part of England and Russia; or rather, conditions were stipulated for by the former, to which the latter refused to agree. Towards the commencement of April the English Government asked Parliament for a credit in order to call out the Reserves, and a war between Russia and Great Britain appeared imminent. Bismarck energetically strove to avert it, in which endeavour Count Schouvaloff (who was also peaceably inclined, and who paid the Chancellor a visit on his way to St. Petersburg) cordially supported him. The result of their representations to the Russian Cabinet was a favourable one; on May 30, a Convention was signed between Schouvaloff and Lord Salisbury in which the clauses of the San Stefano Treaty respecting which England and Russia had come to terms, as well as the questions to be settled by the entire Congress, were indicated; and at length the German Chancellor was enabled to issue his invitations to the Congress, which was opened on June 13 and continued to function under the Presidency of Prince Bismarck, until July 13. At first the discussions were somewhat lengthy, and all sorts of difficulties had to be surmounted; which, but for the adroit intermediation of the President, would probably have caused the assembly to break up without having achieved any result. The chief subjects of negotiation were the Bulgarian question and the cession to Russia of Batoum. When a hitch occurred with respect to these matters, Bismarck received the *Times* correspondent and held a conversation with him which the latter published. Upon that occasion, the Prince remarked that England had achieved a great success in limiting the Bulgarian frontier, and therefore should not exact further concessions from Russia, whose love of peace was not boundless. Should there be war, Germany would take no part in it.

It was not the mission of the Congress to find means for the complete solution of the Eastern question; but to reconcile the provisional Peace of San Stefano with the requirements and claims of the European Powers and with the Treaties of 1856 and 1871; and this was effected. The Treaty of San Stefano had created a huge Slavonic State in Bulgaria, subjected to Russian influence, swallowing up a Greek population in Thrace and Macedonia, and possessing ports on the Euxine and the Ægean. The Berlin Treaty replaced two-thirds of the territory in question under the direct political and military rule of the Sultan; Bulgaria was restricted to the Danube Valley, obtained no port in the Archipelago, and was only allowed to reach a point some twenty-five miles distant from the Ægean. In the Black Sea the valuable port of Burgas was restored to the Ottoman Empire; Bulgaria merely retaining the roads of Varna. Through these arrangements and the conversion of Batoum into a Free Port, the menace to the freedom of the Black Sea embodied in the San Stefano Treaty was materially weakened, to the manifest advantage of the English. The mandate granted by the Congress to Austria-Hungary, to occupy and administer Bosnia and the Herzegovina gave that Power an important position, from which it commanded the western portion of the Balkan Peninsula and ruptured communications between the Slavs on the Adriatic and those on the Danube and Drina. Russia had, no doubt, been compelled to disgorge part of her booty; but she retained quite enough to render her content with the results of the war and grateful to the German intermediator who brought about this settlement. Russia had asked for the Congress, and obtained it through the agency of the German Chancellor, who had never combated Russia's demands throughout the negotiations; but, on the

contrary, had supported them to the best of his ability. More than once the German and Russian representatives had constituted a minority together in the Congress; but for the most part German influence was successful in obtaining the fulfilment of Russia's wishes. The Chancellor experienced great difficulties on several occasions in settling questions involving cession of territory to Russia, and only surmounted them by plainly intimating that, if Russian requirements should be denied, Germany would renounce her participation in the Conference. We happen to know positively that Germany would have carried her support of Russia even further, had the latter put forward still larger claims. That she refrained from doing so was not due to any backwardness on the part of Germany, but to the fact that Russia did not want to fight England, chiefly because the Russians had forborne from seizing Constantinople and the Straits at the right moment. Having failed to do this, they committed a grave political error in concluding such a Treaty as that of San Stefano. In possession of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus, Russia could have looked forward calmly to a naval war.

Proper consideration, therefore, was shown towards Russia's equitable interests. Prince Bismarck had adhered to the declarations made by him in the German Parliament; he had rendered every service to Russia that was compatible with the safety of Austria-Hungary; he had opened up a path between humiliation and a perilous war with England and Austria to his old ally, exhausted by its desperate struggle with Turkey. That he could not well do more without causing Germany to incur the enmity of the rest of Europe was perfectly clear; but not to the apprehensions of Moscow and Petersburg. He had approved of the diminution and division of Bulgaria, and of the occupation

by Austria of Bosnia and the Herzegovina (proposed by England). To Russian covetousness this was treason to former friendship, and ingratitude for Russia's behaviour in 1866 and 1870.

Very shortly after the Congress the Russian press gave utterance to its discontent with Germany; but Russia's hatred of Austria and the Fatherland broke out with full violence in January 1879, and was chiefly poured forth upon Prince Bismarck, whose home and foreign policy was furiously attacked by the Petersburg and Moscow newspapers. Some of the articles then published represented the Radicalism which had become the fashion in certain classes of Russian society. Others had their origin in higher circles; we do not refer to the Czar himself, but to those about him. Especially hostile to Germany were the *Journal de St. Pétersbourg*, the *Russki Mir* and the widely-circulated *Golos*, which last named journal missed no opportunity of denouncing Prince Bismarck, of exhibiting German affairs in an unfavourable light, and of coquetting with other countries—more particularly with France.

(A lengthy and abusive article, condemning the Chancellor's domestic and economic policy, which the author has reproduced from the columns of the *Golos*, is here omitted in the English version of "Unser Reichskanzler," as unlikely to instruct or interest the English readers of that work.—Translator's Note.)

From whom did these reproaches, attacks, and prophecies really emanate? Who was it that recommended an alliance with France, aimed manifestly at Germany as well as at England? The *Golos* had theretofore been a press organ notoriously honoured with Prince Gortchakoff's confidence —the official speaking-trumpet of his views and wishes. That was no longer the case, people said. But those who

were well-informed doubted the genuineness of all the manifestations of displeasure with which the *Golos* was, for a time, assailed by the Russian Chancellor, and felt convinced that its anti-German utterances were dictated at the Foreign Office in Petersburg, and by no less a personage than Baron Jomini, Gortchakoff's right hand. As a matter of fact, Prince Gortchakoff had not been able to make Germany as dependent upon Russia as he had hoped to do; he had not, at the Congress, obtained the support from Prince Bismarck to which he considered himself entitled; he had always cherished a sneaking kindness for France; finally, the contrast between his own mediocre achievements and the greatness of the statesman who had guided Germany's policy with such splendid success, angered and annoyed him.

Even more vehemently than in January, 1879, did the Russian press, official and unofficial, attack Germany when (in the course of the next few ensuing months) the clauses of the Berlin Treaty had to be carried out—first and foremost the withdrawal of the Russian troops from Turkish territory—and Russia found herself forlorn of the unconditional German support to which she thought she had a right. This journalistic onslaught was supplemented by diplomatic intimations, successively couched in urgent, dictatorial and threatening terms. At the same time the Russian army was greatly strengthened, and large concentrations of troops—chiefly of cavalry—took place in the Western provinces, whilst authentic information reached Berlin to the effect that a Russian General had sounded the leading personages in Paris respecting a Franco-Russian Alliance. Germany and Austria alike were menaced by the gathering storm, and it appeared to them both high time to take measures to prevent it from bursting upon them. Thus, at the initiative

of the German Chancellor, the Austro-German Alliance of 1879 came to pass, and was substituted for the Russo-German League that had theretofore existed. This Alliance has endured ever since, with undiminished vigour and intimacy, and has triumphantly proved itself (throughout all the complications arising out of the Berlin Treaty) to be an effective guarantee for the peace of both Empires and of Europe. It has regulated Russia's subsequent attitude towards the Central European Powers; firstly it caused her to draw in her horns, and then to change front, as far as was compatible with public feeling. Meanwhile Nihilism, a natural outgrowth of Muscovite civilisation, continued to undermine society and compelled the Russian Government to concentrate its attention upon home affairs. Alexander II. fell a victim to the dynamite projectiles of Nihilistic assassins. His successor is credited with Panslavistic tendencies and French predilections—whether or not correctly so remains to be seen. One thing is certain, viz.: that he has recognised the unconditional necessity of peace to Russia, and has hitherto acted conformably to that necessity. His meeting at Danzig with the Emperor William, who was on that occasion accompanied by Bismarck, was the first public testimony to his desire to reinstate the friendly relations between his Government and that of Germany which had been broken off in 1879; and he has also more than once displayed an amiable and conciliatory spirit towards Austria. No doubt, the strong and active party in Russian upper circles of society, whose wishes and projects were proclaimed in General Skobeleff's Chauvinistic speeches, had striven with might and main to disturb the amicable understanding revived by the Czar between Russia and her Western neighbours, and to instigate a struggle for the realisation of its Panslavistic

dreams. But the Imperial will has proved stronger than this agitation. Ignatieff, one of the chiefs of the party alluded to, only remained a short time in office as Minister of the Interior; and Gortchakoff's successor, de Giers, the present chief of the Foreign Office at Petersburg, signified by his visit to Varzin that it was his Sovereign's desire to keep up the connection revived at the Danzig meeting, and to improve the good understanding that thereafter prevailed amongst the three Imperial Courts. During the autumn of 1883, M. de Giers again visited the Chancellor at Friedrichsruhe. Since that time nothing has occurred which could give us reason to doubt the peaceable intentions of the Russian Court and Cabinet, although the Russian Chauvinists continue, at every convenient opportunity, to give vent to their dislike of the Germans and yearning for the unification of all the Slavonic tribes under the flag of Holy Russia.

CHAPTER III.

BISMARCK'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS POLISH PRETENSIONS.

DURING the summer of 1882 the *Czas* (a journal described in the foregoing chapter) published an article purporting to contain the German Chancellor's views respecting the possible restoration of Poland, and stating that he had invited an illustrious Polish patriot to Varzin in order to hear what he had to say upon the question, and that a conversation had ensued from which it might be gathered that Prince Bismarck would not be averse to the transformation (after a war in which Germany should have vanquished Russia) of Russian Poland into an independent State, His Highness deeming that such a State—by reason of the gratitude its inhabitants would experience towards Germany and their ineradicable hatred of their former oppressors—would serve Germany as a bulwark on her eastern frontier.

This whole story was contradicted, and in very strong terms, by the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, which designated it "a miserable stopgap for the summer-season, invented by an unreasoning feuilletonist. The alleged visit of a Pole to Varzin and the alleged conversation have never taken place at all; and the alleged letter of the Chancellor, with which this swindle is commenced, is a forgery of no interest to anybody except a criminal judge."

Thus the official newspaper; a more vigorous and con-

clusive *démenti* could scarcely have been pronounced, nor one better calculated to settle the matter for good and all. Nevertheless, several German journals reproduced the *Czas*'s article in full, without expressing any doubts of its correctness; and *semper aliquid hæret*, however ridiculous such a calumny may appear to well-informed persons. Besides, the *Czas* is the organ of the aristocratic Czartoryski party, often correctly posted up in the sayings and doings of exalted political circles.

A similar myth was published in an account (compiled from official materials) of the 1863 Polish insurrection, produced by N. W. Berg in the *Russkaia Starina* of 1879; e.g.—"Early in 1865, when we were busy crushing the then subsiding revolt, and industriously striving to re-establish public order, Prince Bismarck sent the King's General Aide-de-Camp, Von Treschkow, to Dresden to inform the Polish National Plenipotentiary Klobukowski, there residing, that he (Bismarck) was about to visit Petersburg, where he would have an opportunity to discuss the destinies of Poland in the highest quarters. He wished to know if the Poles would deem it expedient to make a demonstration in favour of Prussia and to announce their solemn determination not to remain under Russian despotism, but to submit themselves to German rule. If he could rely upon such a resolve on their part, Prince Bismarck would propose a political combination in Petersburg, in accordance with which Russia would probably cede to Prussia that part of the Polish kingdom lying on the Vistula. Bismarck, at least, would propose that she should do so. Thereupon Klobukowski betook himself to the celebrated Polish author Kraszewski, whom he besought to get up a demonstration on behalf of Prussia, which would not have been difficult just then, so bitter was the anti-Russian feeling in Poland.

Kraszewski, however, replied that he held no mandate from his compatriots to undertake any such enterprise; that he was not even a party-leader; and that he could do nothing of the sort. But he advised Klobukowski to visit Czartoryski in Paris, and consult him and his friends upon so highly important a proposition. Armed with a letter of introduction from Kraszewski, Klobukowski called at the Hôtel Lambert; Czartoryski read the letter and exclaimed, without a moment's hesitation, 'To the Germans! Not for the world!' which put an end to the whole business."

This narrative has been categorically denied by the Polish as well as the Prussian official press. Klobukowski publicly called its author a liar, and threatened him with an action for libel. The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* wrote: "It is not true that General von Treschkow was sent in 1865, or at any other time, to Dresden, or to any other place, as an agent of the Polish National Government. The Prussian Government has never conducted or wished to conduct any negotiations with any agent of the Polish National Government; and nobody in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has ever known of the existence of a person named Klobukowski. Ignorance of facts has never attained such a depth in the Prussian Ministry as to justify it in believing in the expediency of soliciting the co-operation of the Polish Revolutionary party in order to bring about the cession of any portion of Russian Poland to Prussia. The possibility of such a cession has been, it is true, mooted here several times since the death of Alexander I.; but invariably at the initiative of Russia and in an anti-Polish sense, with a view to facilitating the subjugation of Poland."

Lies of this sort—perhaps fabricated with more ingenuity and *connaissance de cause*—may, however, sooner or later be

revived. It may therefore not be superfluous to demonstrate that such plans as those attributed to the Chancellor by Berg and the *Czas* could not possibly be ever entertained by him.

That a large proportion of the Russian people dislikes the Germans, and that Russia may one of these days cause us great inconvenience and danger, are undeniable truisms. But it would be difficult to prove that the restoration of Poland would do away with or even diminish the perils to which our Eastern Marches are exposed. It may be said: "Europe can declare Polonia Rediviva a neutral State, and solemnly guarantee its neutrality." We answer: "Solemnity may be had cheap; but the 'bulwark' erected by the neutrality in question would be no better than a paper one." For Prussia and Germany to create a new Poland out of Russia's share of the old one would be to call into existence two troublesome Oriental neighbours in the stead of one. The Poles hate Russia; but no less do they detest Germany, on account of her great power of assimilation, by means of of which she has peaceably Germanised Posen and West Prussia. Poland—or, more correctly speaking, her nobles—would be indebted to us, were we to restore a portion of the former kingdom; but they would certainly not be grateful, or at best would regard our gift as an instalment, like the Irredentists with respect to United Italy in 1866, the Greeks with regard to the augmentation of the Hellenic Kingdom by Thessaly, and the Omladina anent the creation and enlargement of Servia. In other words:—By the formation of a Polish State about a third as large as the former kingdom of Poland, all the pretensions that animate every class of Poles would resuscitate and acquire a real nucleus and solid point of departure. A Poland of this kind would soon manifest a leaning towards France and

utilise its army and diplomacy for the recovery of the 1772 frontier—for which it would scarcely be to blame, considering that it would stand in need of a coast for its imports and exports.

If the *Czas* had reported that an illustrious Pole, in 1854, had communicated his ideas in connection with the Restoration of Poland to Count Buol, and had secured that statesman's approval, the story would have been a credible one, even if it had described Buol as prepared to give up Galicia and Lodomiria. Austria was then extremely thick with the Western Powers, which might very well have regarded the restoration of Poland as a convenient weapon in their struggle with Russia, and she would probably have contributed her share thereto, for a handsome consideration.

Since then, circumstances have materially altered. Hungary is content. The Danubian Principalities, Roumania and Servia, are become Kingdoms. Above all, the old rivalry between Austria and Prussia has ceased to be, and is replaced by a close alliance founded on their mutual interests. Nowadays, Austria-Hungary can think no more of a Polish Restoration. She leaves that notion to the conspirators in Cracow and Lemberg, who busy themselves with preparing new revolutionary outbreaks by way of shewing her their gratitude for the favour shewn to the Polish nationality under the actual *régime*.

In Prussia the idea of transforming Russian Poland into an independent State has always been and always will be out of the question, at least amongst persons endowed with political sagacity. It was once entertained by His Excellency Josias Bunsen (who gave vent to it in a diplomatic document), and was inscribed upon the creed of the Old Liberals; but all these gentlemen were forlorn of statesmanlike ability, as, most conspicuously, were the Democrats of

the *Volkszeitung* category, who so vociferously and verbosely preached "Justice to Poland." The days when Germans overlooked their own rights whilst manifesting deferential respect for those of foreigners are past and gone. We no longer dissolve in sentimental emotion over the "Finis Poloniæ" of the mythical Kosciusko (the real one never said anything of the kind) nor do we excite ourselves about the rhymes which state that "Poland is not yet lost." To Macaulay's allegation that the partition of Poland was the most shameful achievement of European policy, we reply:—"Nothing of the sort; the Polish Republic owed its destruction much less to foreigners than to the inconceivable worthlessness of those persons who represented the Polish nation when it was finally broken up."

Prussia and Germany have great need of their share of Poland. During the debate on the Address of Sept. 24, 1867, the Federal Chancellor declared:—"I do not consider that German rule over disaffected nations—I will not even say rule, but co-existence in the relations of every-day life of Germans with disaffected aliens—is desirable; but sometimes it is necessary. For instance, it is so in Poland, as a glance at the map will demonstrate."

On another occasion, during the same year, he gave his reasons for the above *dictum* in a historical retrospect, the leading passages of which are subjoined:—

"How did the province of West Prussia and the rule of the Knightly Orders originate in Prussia? Duke Conrad of Masovia, to defend his realm against the inroads of the Prussian heathen, called in the German Knights and bestowed upon them a small Polish territory, the Dobriner district, also promising them all of the land they could redeem from the adjoining wastes and conquer from the savage Prussian tribes. Thus the whole country eastward

of the Vistula (comprehending a considerable portion of the present East and West Prussia) became a purely German territory, colonised by Germans; and the Order of German Knights subsequently acquired that part of West Prussia which is situate on the left bank of the Vistula by legal Treaty; for when the dynasty of the Nether-Pomeranian Dukes died out in the 13th century, that territory with its capital, Danzig, reverted to the feudal lord (Margrave of Brandenburg), and Margrave Waldemar at once took possession of it. His successors, unable to defend these possessions (Nether Pomerania), ceded them to the Order, from which the Kingdom of Poland subsequently took them by conquest when the Order had been weakened and the Germans had been beaten at Tannenberg; finally, after many *pourparlers*, an arrangement was concluded between the West-Prussian *Staende* and the Polish Crown in virtue of which the former were to be connected with the latter by "personal union." Thus Poland—by conquest, subsequently sanctioned by Treaties—became possessed of West Prussia, and proceeded to colonise it; not, as we have been accused of doing, to "Germanise it with culture," but to Polonise it with fire and sword. Contrary to Treaty, it sent Polish officials into West Prussia, who enriched themselves by expropriating the local nobility. The towns were also restricted in their liberties; later on, religious freedom was granted and maintained in theory—but the Protestant churches were closed, confiscated and made over to Catholic communes which were constituted of the landowners and officials imported from Poland. Many citizens lost their heads on the scaffold through protesting against these proceedings. Of nineteen thousand villages in West Prussia, only three thousand escaped destruction during the Polish ravages perpetrated after the battle of

Tannenberg, and even these were done away with during the wars between Poland and Sweden, when disbanded Polish armies repeatedly colonised the devastated German villages . . . Gentlemen, if you appeal to history in the face of these facts, I fail to understand you. As far as the Grand Duchy of Posen is concerned, we acquired that province—inhabited at present by 1,500,000 Prussians, 800,000 of whom speak Polish, and 700,000 German—by hard fighting. We wrested it a second time (1813) from an enemy superior to us in strength; and our conquest was sanctioned by international Treaties. It is thus that States are formed. We have the same right to Posen that we have to Silesia. If you contest the right of conquest, you cannot have read the history of your own country . . . The beginnings of Poland were small. The districts on the Lake of Goplo and on the Warthe (now known as Great Poland) became united by agglomeration with Little Poland in the neighbourhood of Cracow. The whole territory, at that time, did not extend farther than the present frontiers of Western Galicia, and was not as large as the so-called Kingdom of Poland. When it became more powerful, through matrimonial alliances with the Lithuanian Princes, its passion for conquest was directed against the German Order . . . Poland annexed the territorities now constituting Eastern Galicia and inhabited by the same Ruthenes who populate Volhynia, Podolia and the south-eastern provinces of the Kingdom of Poland. Crossing the Dnieper, Poland took Kieff, the ancient Russian capital, Tchernigoff, Smolensk and countries much larger than those acquired by Russia through the first partition of Poland. The previous speaker called the partition of Poland a crime. It was no greater malefaction than the partition of Russia in the 14th century, which you Poles effected when you were strong

enough to do so. Look into your own hearts, and confess that you have committed the crime of conquest an hundredfold—in fact, as often as you could."

"The participation of the Germans in the mutilation of Poland was a necessary compliance with the law of self-preservation. Before the first partition Berlin was barely three days' march from the Slavonic western frontier. The Great Elector had freed Prussia from Polish feudality; Frederic the Great, by recovering possession of West Prussia, then inhabited by a large number of German colonists, connected it solidly with Pomerania and Brandenburg, thus securing it provisionally against hostile irruptions from the east. Whoever wishes to see that arrangement revoked also desires to hand over the mouths of the Vistula, Elbing, Thorn and Danzig—aye, the whole of East Prussia, which in that case would be untenable—to the heirs of Peter the Great, or to a patrician Republic of the most miserable description, having the Jesuits for its steadfast allies. Opinions may differ about the details of the subsequent partitions; but they were both indispensable. Prussia could not insure the life of a corrupt and decaying Republic, which would indubitably have been divided between Russia and Austria; and she only fulfilled a duty to herself in restricting the increment of her neighbour States by claiming a share in their spoil. Besides, a frontier extending her lines of defence as far eastwards as possible was requisite for the adequate protection of Berlin and the very heart of the Monarchy. The second partition achieved too much in this direction; for the vast amount of intelligence, physical force and capital expended by Prussia in securing and utilising the annexed Slavonic territory did not suffice to effect those objects. The third partition did too little. It was no great evil that only the smaller moiety of South

Prussia was reunited to the Prussian State as the Duchy of Posen by the convention of 1815; but the territory in question did not sufficiently connect the extensive and naturally open frontiers of Silesia and East Prussia, and—but for the formidable fortresses now nearly completed—would but incompletely cover the capital of the German Empire; meanwhile the Germanising of the province has made satisfactory progress; by which we do not only mean the dissemination of the German language, but that of German morality and culture, and the upright administration of justice, the elevation of the peasant-class and the prosperity of the towns. The peasant, from being a despised, ill-used and mercilessly plundered vassal of some noble tyrant, is become a free man, the owner of the soil he cultivates. Nobody plunders him now but the usurious Jew. German farmers, machines and manufactories have promoted agriculture and husbandry. Railways and good roads have increased the general well-being of the province. Schools organised after the German pattern inpart elementary instruction to Polish children; gymnasia teach the higher sciences, not by the hollow mechanical methods of the Jesuit Fathers, but in that solid German way which enables people to think for themselves. Army service completes whatever is left unachieved by the popular schools. In the army the young Polish peasant learns to understand and speak German. Through what he is taught in his company or squadron, and through intercourse with the German inhabitants of his garrison-town he acquires ideas which enrich and emancipate his poor and fettered intelligence. His notions of *meum* and *tuum* become clearer; he adopts cleanly and orderly habits and for the most part, retains them. When he loses them, and other more intellectual boons, it is generally because the clergy wish to keep up the old ruinous

routine, as a part of good old Polish patriotism; ignorance and helplessness being, in the opinion of these reverend persons, excellent servants of the Church."

"This method of Germanisation has been furthered by the Government, which has never practised any other, despite its many opportunities for so doing. When, shortly after its acquisition by Prussia, the province fell into distress through bad harvests, the administration could have easily relieved the Polish nobles of half their property by a comparatively small pecuniary outlay. It preferred however to assist them by founding a Credit Institution in Posen with advantages such as had not been accorded to any similar establishment in other provinces. No political conditions were attached to the assistance thus afforded, nor was any favour shown to persons of German nationality. Of the landed proprietors who settled and carried out the Provincial Ordinances sixty-seven were Poles and only seven Germans. The province was administered by a committee, exclusively composed of Poles, nor did the State alter these arrangements by reason of the events of 1830; it was only after the conspiracy of 1846, in which several provincial officials had taken part, that a royal officer was appointed as chief of the institution; and this nomination was revoked in 1848. The period above referred to had afforded ample opportunities for Germanisation. In 1830 fourteen hundred persons were condemned to suffer confiscation and imprisonment, and twelve hundred of them were pardoned. Only twenty-two landowners were deprived of their estates, which however they were permitted to redeem by paying one-fifth of their value into the State Exchequer. The disturbances of those days shook the Polish provincial nobility's hold upon its landed property very seriously. Had the Government simply shut its eyes to that fact, the greater portion

of the land, depreciated in value, would have fallen of itself into German hands; but the State came forward as a buyer, in order to save the sums lent upon the estates, raise the price of land, and attract to the province men who might further its agricultural development. The estates thus purchased were sold, entire, or in parcels, to buyers under conditions highly beneficial to the peasants inhabiting them. Had the State had mere Germanising in view it would have excluded the Poles from these transactions, and imposed restrictions as to re-sale upon the German purchasers. It did nothing of the kind. That a good many estates have passed from Polish into German hands during the last few years is not attributable to Government instrumentality, but to the frivolity, extravagance and slovenly administration of the Polish nobles."

"But the language?" people ask, as emphatically as though the Polish-speaking Prussian were persecuted, in this respect, as oppressively as formerly the German Schleswiger under the Danish *régime*, or nowadays the Transylvanian Saxon under Magyar tyranny. No assumption could be more groundless. The Polish language is free, and frequently predominant, in the market-place, drawing-room, school and church. In the two latter, until very lately, German was even at a disadvantage because the Catholic clergy strove against it with all their might, and very successfully, as has been pointed out in Chapter II. Vol. I. Polish is the language taught in all the Catholic schools of the mixed districts, and in the four lower classes of the higher educational institutions of all confessions, as well as in all the provincial schools. The Polish Church-Service is performed in Latin and Polish, to which tongues stray Germans must conform in church. The municipal discussions in the smaller towns are carried on in Polish; both languages have equal play at the elections. With respect

to legal proceedings, the laws are translated into Polish from the German text, which is, of course, appealed to whenever any difficulties accrue. The tribunals correspond with one another and other authorities in German. In trials, the plaintiff's idiom is adopted; if he be acquainted with both languages or neither, the case is tried in German. Interpreters are sworn to assist the Court. Mayors of small towns and clergymen are allowed to correspond with the authorities in Polish if they do not understand German. Private persons, not known to be familiar with German, receive German official communications accompanied by Polish translations."

"The Poles cannot fairly ask for more than this, and their Deputies and press-organs in Posen, instead of perpetually grumbling, should look about them and gratefully acknowledge all that has been done for their country and its population under the Prussian *régime*. They could not fail to recognise a long series of benefits conferred upon them (despite the resistance thereto of the Polish nobility, clergy and communes) which they would be sorry enough to lose now. Imprimis, since 1815 the Government has increased the number of schools fifteen-fold and of teachers seventeen-fold in the predominantly Polish and Catholic districts of the province. There are eight gymnasia instead of two; three Catholic seminaries, five *Realschule*, four pro-gymnasia, an agricultural school, a deaf and dumb asylum, a madhouse and a school for gardeners have been founded. Through its wealth of elementary schools (2162 with 2965 teachers and 220,000 scholars) Posen occupies an extremely honourable position amongst the eastern provinces of the Prussian Monarchy. Great things have been done for it by the Government in the way of constructing railways. For twenty years past the province has possessed a comprehen-

sive system of lines, traversing it from north to south and east to west. In 1830 it could only boast of four miles of turnpike road; in 1862 it was provided with 332. Especial care has been bestowed upon cultivating the soil of Posen, draining its morasses, &c.

"I can proudly say" observed the Chancellor, in the speech already quoted (1867) with which he brought Deputy Kantak to his bearings "that the portion of the whilom Polish Republic now under Prussian rule enjoys a degree of well-being, loyal security and popular attachment to the Government such as never existed, nor was ever even dreamt of, within the limits of the Polish Realm since the commencement of Polish history. Despite all the efforts to agitate public feeling in the province during the revolutions that have accrued every fifteen years or so, the Polish-speaking subjects of Prussia have not been tempted to take part in those demonstrations, got up by a minority composed of nobles, land-stewards and labourers. The peasant has invariably taken up arms with the greatest energy to resist every attempt to resuscitate conditions of existence of which he had heard his parents talk—with such energy, indeed, that the Government was compelled in 1848 to employ other than Polish troops against the insurgents, in the interests of humanity. Polish soldiers have repeatedly proved their attachment to Prussia in time of war: on Danish and Bohemian battlefields they have testified their devotion to the King with their blood and with the valour peculiar to their race."

The elections in Posen seemed to cast doubt upon the attachment above referred to, for they sent up to the Diet and Parliament alike a group of exceedingly stiff-necked opponents to the Government. They were, however, merely the result of an all but unexampled agitation in which

the Polish clergy had played the leading part; and the deputies who were their product received an ecclesiastical, not a national mandate. They were elected to represent their constituents as Catholics whose faith was menaced—not as Poles. Bismarck, in the Reichstag as well as the Landtag, repeatedly pointed out to them that their opposition to the Government was naught, being based upon erroneous foregone conclusions. In his speech of March 18, 1867, he proved to them that they had been elected to protect their constituents from the perils with which (according to the representations of seditious priests) their Catholic consciences were menaced by Germany; not in the least to represent yearnings for a Polish Restoration. A priest whom the Chancellor mentioned by name had addressed a meeting of peasants as follows:—"The elections are at hand; we must pull ourselves together, or we shall be forbidden to speak Polish, to sleep in Polish, to pray, sing and weep in Polish, even to preach a sermon in Polish. Our children will all be turned into Germans," (synonymous with Protestants, to Poles of the lower classes) "and then Germany will treat us just as Russia does; that is, we shall be hanged for calling ourselves Poles." Another priest recommended himself as a candidate by assuring his Polish hearers that the Government meant to rob them of their native language and their faith, and to make Protestants of them. The peasants of one Polish village told their landlord that no doubt he meant them well, but they must vote for the anti-governmental provost, their salvation being at stake; for the provost had told them they must not look for absolution at Easter if they did not elect him. Any number of priests delivered electioneering speeches from the pulpit, announcing to their flocks with floods of tears that, unless they should elect Poles, they would inevitably be compelled to give

up the Catholic religion and the Polish language. At the conclusion of these discourses the beadles, standing by the church-doors, distributed voting-tickets to the panic-stricken electors.

Thus matters stood in 1867; and such has been the action of the clergy in Poland and West Prussia at every subsequent election. Bismarck, in his speech against Kantak, ironically remarked that the sanctity of the priestly profession forbade him to doubt the sincerity of these ecclesiastics. "But," he added "such a dead level of ignorance respecting secular matters prevails amongst them as to justify the Government's earnest desire that it may be put an end to by the higher clergy, if the latter should retain the superintendence of the education of youth." This desire, rendered more urgent by the seditious behaviour of Polish priests in 1870, has not been fulfilled. Laws regulating the inspection of schools, etc., and bearing especially upon Posen and West Prussia were passed. They became the subject of bitter complaint in Parliament from the Polish and Clerical Deputies; and as the agitation aroused by them did not abate, it became necessary to modify, and even to suspend them in those provinces.

Are these Polish deputies entitled to speak in the name of the Poles and to demand privileges for these latter? The Chancellor's repeatedly quoted speech, as much to the point to-day as it was sixteen years ago, says No. Of 2,800,000 inhabitants of Posen and West Prussia, 1,150,000 are Poles, whilst 1,450,000 are Polish and German Catholics. There are consequently about 300,000 German-speaking Catholics who are in great part led away by clerical intrigues to vote with their Polish co-religionaries for the candidates of the Opposition. Bismarck was in the right, therefore, when he said to the Polish Parliamentary fraction in 1867: "You are not justified in speaking in the name of the

3,000,000 of people inhabiting these provinces; you may be justified in speaking on behalf of the Catholics, but not on behalf of the Poles; that is to say, you are not justified in representing the nationality of persons who have voted for you in the fear that their faith—the holiest thing they carry in their hearts—may be interfered with; a fear which has been awakened in them by disingenuous and lying representations." On April 1, 1871, when the Polish fraction moved the House not to incorporate Posen in the German Empire, giving itself all the air of being empowered to represent the Polish nation, the Chancellor exclaimed:—"The twenty or so Deputies who bear themselves here as though they were an entire people—the Polish people—are not a people, do not represent a people, and have no people at all behind them; indeed they have nothing behind them but illusions and errors, one of which is that they have been elected to Parliament to represent the Polish nationality. I know why they have been elected. . . . You were elected, gentlemen, to represent the interests of the Catholic Church; and if you do that, whenever those interests shall be called in question, you will fulfil your duty to your electors. That was what you were elected for, and you are fully entitled to do it; but you have received no mandate to represent the Polish people or nationality in this House. Nobody has confided that mission to you—least of all the people of the Grand Duchy of Posen. That population does not believe in the fiction which you promulgate, viz.:—that the Polish rule was a good one, or rather 'not a bad one,' as the previous speaker expressed it. With all imaginable impartiality and desire to be just I can assure you that it was an infamously bad one; and that is why it shall never be revived."

"One need only think about a restoration of Poland

with its 1772 frontiers," observed the Chancellor in 1867, whilst explaining the actual circumstances in question, "to become convinced of its impracticability. It is absolutely impossible, for the simple reason that there are not Poles enough. People talk about sixteen millions of Poles. The territory owned in 1772 by the whilom Polish Republic is inhabited at the present time by 24,000,000 human beings. Of these 7,500,000 are Poles (that is all the whole wide world contains) and 1,500,000 of them are scattered about the vast territories that constitute the western governments of the Russian Empire, amongst populations which are not Polish, do not want to be Poles, and would not relapse into subjection to Polish rule for all the world. Look, in Galicia, at the enmity of the Ruthenes to the Poles, who formerly governed them as well as the West Prussians. I point to this particular example because it is familiar to everybody; by it you may judge what are the feelings of the 10,000,000 or more of people, not Poles, who, in common with 1,200,000 Poles, inhabit Western Russia. The population of the West-Russian provinces consists of ten per cent. of Poles, strewn about upon their surface—either descendants of former conquerors, or renegades of other races who have adopted the Polish tongue and morality—and ninety per cent. of mostly Ruthenes and White Russians, who speak nothing but Russian, pray in Russian, weep in Russian (when under Polish domination), are Russians, mean to remain Russians, and stand by the Russian Government in combating the Polish nobility; the rest are Lithuanians, Letts, Germans and a vast number of Jews. There, of your 24,000,000, you have at once 12,000,000 of whom it would be the greatest conceivable injustice to subject ninety per cent. to the feared and hated rule of ten per cent.

In Galicia as I have already mentioned, you have 2,000,000 of Ruthenes against 2,000,000 of Poles in West Galicia; in the Kingdom of Poland 3,400,000 Poles, as well as 250,000 Russians in the Lublin Government, 250,000 Lithuanians between the Niemen and Suwalki, 300,000 Germans and 600,000 Jews. I have already stated that we have 800,000 Poles in the Province of Posen, and 350,000 in West Prussia. Reckon all these together, and you will make up a total of 6,500,000 Poles. It is, therefore, in the name of these six and a half millions that you claim the rule over twenty-four millions, in a tone and with an emphasis indicating that it is the most profound and abominable tyranny and humiliation that you are no longer allowed to oppress and ride roughshod over those people, as, unfortunately for them, you did throughout five successive centuries. If we look a little closely into the matter, we see at once that such a pretension does not deserve the consideration of Europe for a second; it is simply Utopian to dream of breaking up three great realms; Austria, Prussia and Russia—three of the five European Great Powers—in order to build up out of their fragments a fantastical dominion of 6,000,000 Poles ruling over 18,000,000 of human beings who are not Poles. Why it is not even credible that the 6,000,000 Poles would put up with a Polish Government; their experiences of such a *régime* have been too dismal. Why did the Polish agitation in Western Galicia come to a stand-still? Because the Polish nobles were aware that the peasant had found out what they were aiming at, *i.e.* the Restoration of Poland. That discovery so appalled the Polish yokel that he turned his back upon the movement; and the nobles were frightened too, remembering the fearfully atrocious deeds of blood perpetrated by the peasants in 1846 (when they

slaughtered 2000 Polish aristocrats and priests with scythes and flails), and thought it wiser to put up their swords—since which they have lived at peace with the Austrian Government. I think I need only mention that fact—the Polish gentlemen present know all about it better than I do—to prove that 6,500,000 Poles do not intend to be ever again domineered over by a couple of hundred thousand Polish noblemen. This is moreover demonstrated by the course of the insurrection in Russia. I do not wish to vaunt the exceptional mildness of Russian rule; but the Polish peasant has more confidence in it than in the domination of his noble fellow countrymen. As soon as the hanging gendarmes had vanished, the Russians—wherever they made their appearance three years ago—found the peasants ready and willing to back them up, as far as was consistent with the timorousness of a terrorised population. I would therefore request you, gentlemen—you, I mean, who pretend that you represent the Polish people—to refrain from keeping Europe, Prussia and your own province in hot water by continuing to pursue an unattainable object. . . . That the Polish nobility should experience a sort of nostalgia for its former conditions and privileges I can readily understand; but I earnestly exhort you to give up phantom-hunting and unite with us. Unite with the majority of your Polish brethren in Prussia and with the Polish peasantry in participating in the benefits of civilisation offered to you by the Prussian State; in the peaceful security guaranteed to you by the North German Confederation. Take your share honestly in our common work; you will find us open-handed, and we will joyfully welcome you among us as brothers and compatriots! To this august Assembly, however, I would specially point out the example of Poland as illustrating how a great and powerful State,

governed by a valiant, warlike, and clear-sighted aristocracy may come to ruin through setting more value upon personal liberty than external security, and sacrificing public interests to individual freedom. . . . The most energetic efforts of the Polish nobility to regain its lost authority, the greatest devotion and most brilliant bravery displayed by patriots in their cause, have not availed to remedy the faults of the past."

Let us finally cast a glance at the Treaties and Proclamations upon which the Polish fraction of the Prussian Diet bases its claims to an exceptional position for Posen in our Monarchy. Bismarck confuted these claims in the Diet, and what follows will be found to correspond to his refutation.

The complaint of the Poles, addressed to our Parliament may be briefly summed up thus :—" In the Vienna Treaty of June 1815 and the Patent of Possession, as well as in the Proclamation accompanying this latter, a Personal Union is created between Posen and Prussia. Moreover, special privileges, with respect to preserving their nationality, language, religion, &c., were granted to the Poles at that time. All this, however, has been disregarded, and still awaits fulfilment."

Let us test these assertions by facts.

The action of Frederick William II. in connection with the partition of Poland may be open to condemnation; but his successor acquired Posen in 1815 by good honest hard fighting. The public respect and sympathy which the Poles had won under Kosciusko's leadership they deservedly lost by their servile attachment to Napoleon, under whose command they fought against nobler and more freedom-loving peoples than themselves. They were never more despicable than in 1814, when Talleyrand wrote, "The Polish affair is merely a question of partition

and frontier definition, to be settled amongst themselves by the States interested in it, and possessing no importance for France or Europe." Lord Castlereagh also wrote that he "did not see why Prussia should not be indemnified at the cost of an enemy who, according to the principles of international law, had lost the totality of its political rights." Nobody but Czar Alexander of Russia shewed the least sympathy for the Poles; not only did Baron von Stein, but his own Minister, Pozzo di Borgo, disagree with him. "If the Poles," observed the latter, "are so fit for a free Constitution, why did they not assert themselves as a nation towards Bonaparte? Why were they content to remain a French military Department? Why did they raise no objections to attacking and slaughtering the Spaniards? Why did they feast and carouse when ordered to march upon the Pyrenees? The Poles do not want emancipation, but independence, after having sacked Madrid and burnt Moscow. They declaim dramas about their misfortunes; but their lot is no worse than that of every other people which has behaved itself as they have." It was in this temper that the Vienna Congress addressed itself to its task.

The first Article of the Treaty of June 9, 1815, says: "The Polish subjects of Russia, Austria and Prussia will obtain national institutions, regulated by the description of political existence which each of the Governments to which they belong may deem fit and expedient for them." This promise was fulfilled in Prussia by the creation of Provincial Diets in 1823. Article 23 of the Vienna Treaty goes on to say: "Inasmuch as His Majesty the King of Prussia, through the results of the late war, has become repossessed of several provinces and territories which were ceded by the Peace of Tilsit, it is hereby acknowledged and declared that

His Majesty, his heirs and successors, resume full sovereignty and ownership of the following countries, i.e. his old Polish provinces, the town and territory of Danzig, the Kottbus District, &c., &c.; with all the rights and claims of whatsoever kind appertaining to him before the Tilsit Peace, and never renounced by him in any other Treaty, Convention or Agreement." There is no mention here of any Personal Union. Before the Tilsit Peace the relations of Prussia's Polish provinces to her German ones never bore the character of a Personal Union. The King appointed a Lord Lieutenant for Posen in the Patent of Possession; but the old provinces (Pomerania, for instance,) were also administered by Lords Lieutenant. In the same document he spoke of the new acquisition always as a "Province": and a conclusive refutation of the Personal Union theory is afforded by the arrangement, prescribed by the Patent, that parts of the new province should be incorporated in West Prussia, and *vice versâ*.

The King's Proclamation said: "You will be incorporated in my Monarchy without being compelled to repudiate your nationality. You will participate in the Constitution I intend to grant to my subjects, and, in common with the other provinces of my Kingdom, will be endowed with a Provincial Constitution. Your religion shall be maintained, and its Ministers provided with a suitable endowment. Your personal rights and property will be protected by the laws, with respect to the enactment of which you shall be consulted. Your language shall be used, as well as German, in all public discussions, and every one of you, in proportion to his capacities, shall be eligible for appointment to office in the Duchy, as well as to all posts, honours and dignities in my entire Realm."

On August 3, 1815, the hereditary homaging took place,

after the Lord Lieutenant, Prince Anthony Radziwill, had pronounced an address, in which he congratulated his fellow-countrymen upon being "embodied in a State whose renown and might are based upon wisely-limited freedom, impartial justice, and a Government comprehensively careful of its subjects' interests." Upon this the officials, ecclesiastics and landowners all took the oath of fealty according to the form established in 1796, without any reserve or limitation.

In 1816 the Old-Prussian legislation was re-introduced into Posen in its full force and to its fullest extent. In 1823 the province was endowed with a provincial organization identical with that established in the other Prussian provinces. In dissolving the Diet of 1841, King Frederick William IV. pointed out that the Grand Duchy of Posen was "a province in the same sense as and in every respect identically with the other provinces subjected to our sceptre. . . . The Polish nationality is entitled to consideration and protection by the Vienna Treaty, &c. . . . The praiseworthy attachment of this noble people to its language, manners and historical traditions shall obtain recognition and favour under our Government. But our promises and intentions in this respect must be dependent upon the condition appended to every gift, viz., that it must not be abused. The national feeling of the Posen Poles must for the future develope itself in the direction of their infrangible connection with our Monarchy. Race differences, and the contrast between the designations "Pole," and "German," must be blended in the name of the State—Prussia—to which they all belong in common and for ever."

The Constitution has yielded nothing more to the Poles than was conceded by absolute Monarchy in Prussia. Its first Article says: "All the territories of the Monarchy in their actual dimensions constitute the Prussian State." The

Polish deputies at first proposed to resign their seats, in order not to be obliged to take the oath of adhesion to the Constitution; but they thought better of it. However, in 1850 they again desired to take the oath "with a reservation," and "to safeguard their country's rights by Constitutional means." Naturally the President of the Diet would not permit anything of the sort, remarking:—"If these gentlemen take the oath, they must do so exactly and unconditionally," which they accordingly did; and all the Polish Deputies have done the same ever since. When the North German Confederation was established, Deputy Kantak protested against its comprehension of Posen; i.e. he protested, as the Chancellor proved to him, against the Constitutional Unity of the Prussian Monarchy. His protest, however, was of no more avail than the motion brought forward by the Polish deputies in 1871, that the province of Posen should not be taken into the German Empire; upon which occasion Prince Bismarck exclaimed:—"I dispute your right to appeal to any treaty concerning the exceptional position of individual provinces in the Prussian State, for you have always yourselves scrupulously forborne from carrying out such treaties textually. The very existence of Posen and West Prussia in the Prussian State, as it has obtained for half a century, would have been impossible had anything like what you repeatedly proposed been formulated in those treaties. The provinces of Posen and West Prussia are therefore—according to the Treaties and Proclamations of 1815, the old laws of the land, and the Constitution repeatedly sworn to by their Polish Parliamentary representatives—an integral part of the Prussian Monarchy and German Empire, and whosoever attempts to alter their position in that respect is guilty of high treason."

Summing up the foregoing paragraphs we may reiterate the Chancellor's views upon this matter thus: "Prussia is the legal proprietor of that portion of the former Polish Kingdom incorporated in her realms. The Polish provinces, like all the others, are not mere appendages of the Prussian State organism. All the protests raised against this fact and educed from the Treaties, are null and void, baseless and illogical, and the Deputies who advance them have no authority from their electors to do so. The possession of these provinces is necessary to Prussia. Not to recognise in it the right of conquest is to be oblivious of Polish history in the time of the Republic's power, a history which records a string of conquests, effected with gruesome oppression and plundering of the vanquished. By reason of its constitution, which set individual liberty above State welfare, Poland could not exist in modern times. Its resurrection is absolutely impossible, as involving the domination of six or seven million of Poles over three times that number of human beings belonging to other nationalities, as well as the disintegration of three European first class States. As far as the vast majority of Prussia's Polish populations is concerned, its adoption into her State entity and into the German sphere of culture has proved a blessing to it, which is gratefully acknowledged by many Poles and would be still more so did not their priests inflame their minds against the Government and German institutions by representing the latter as fraught with peril to the Catholic faith. Nevertheless, the people in Polish Prussia would regard a revival of their former condition as a heavy misfortune. Only the nobles and clergy know what they really desire to achieve by agitating for the restoration of the Polish Republic. To them the past is what the fleshpots of Egypt were to the emigrant Jews. They want to be enabled

once more to hector the peasantry to the top of their bent; German discipline, to please them, should give way to Polish liberty. A massive stumbling-block, however, lies in the way of the realisation of their wishes. It is fortunate for Polish "patriotism" or—let us give it its right name—for egotism flaunting the national cockade, that it has not the power to put its whims into execution; for it would inevitably ruin its people and country over again. We shall not in any way assist it to "materialise its phantoms." To do so would be to sin against ourselves, and against our neighbour, who knows what he wants, but "knows not what he does."

CHAPTER IV.

BISMARCK AND THE PRESS.

WHETHER the press, or let us say, periodical literature as it is conducted in Germany, does more harm than good in the political world, and whether it really makes or expresses public opinion, are questions respecting which many people differ. But all well-informed persons are agreed that, with all its short-comings, it is a Power.

The hurry with which newspapers must necessarily be prepared for publication renders it impossible for their editors or contributors to deal fundamentally with any subject, and compels them to think hastily. They are obliged to form judgments upon insufficient evidence. They are precluded from maintaining a steadfast attitude by the variability of the intelligence reaching them by wire and from their correspondents, one item of news sometimes confirming, sometimes refuting another. As a rule a newspaper represents a party, from the standpoint of which it either unwillingly takes an incorrect or oblique view of events, or willingly casts a too favourable or unfavourable light upon them. Moreover, these "organs of public opinion" are not unfrequently started or supported by banking-houses or syndicates, interested in emphasising or ignoring political occurrences—in colouring or even inventing them—with the object of bringing about a rise or fall on 'Change. Consequently, the instruction derived by the

public from the results of journalistic activity are frequently of doubtful value, and sometimes of none at all. Leaving intentional misdirection out of the question, the reader profits but little by what the newspapers teach him. He learns many things, but not much. He retains a very small portion of what he has read; he is sure of nothing, and accustoms himself to "ready writing" and superficiality, as well as to taking his opinions daily from some one else instead of forming them by personal reflection, contemplation of the actual world and verbal exchange of views with other people. He ceases to be reproductive and remains merely receptive, falling, through forgetfulness into the error of mistaking the thoughts of others for his own convictions, and sustaining them with ardour as such. On the other hand, public opinion, as fashioned by leading journals, compels its fabricators to stick to their perversions even when they know better, on pain of losing credit with their subscribers. Reverence for the wisdom of a great newspaper must not suffer abatement; its staff must strive to effect party-objects, and to live by it as well.

At one of his parliamentary evening parties (December, 1875) Bismarck delivered himself as follows upon the subject of the German press. "Too much stress is laid upon the sensational in our papers, as if something astounding were bound to happen every day. Each number must contain a novelty—if possible, an important or extraordinary one. Thus the public is spoilt; it gets to expect and exact such matters from its newspaper, which is driven to require them from its correspondents. These persons are thereby put in a very awkward position. They must send some special item of news in each of their reports; if they fail to do so, their employers either consider them neglectful and too lazy to look about them, or forlorn

of useful connections. Knowing this, a correspondent sits him down and takes counsel with his imagination, or hies away to the Foreign Embassies, which readily furnish him with information such as suits their own purposes. For instance, just now everything is quiet, except that scrap of a Herzegovina, which concerns us not at all. . . . Again, our papers busy themselves far too much with foreign countries, with French affairs, questions asked in the British Parliament, English meetings, elections, appointments and such like. These are matters only now and then possessing any real interest for us. What Paris newspaper troubles itself whether —— or —— is elected to the Diet for Trakehnen or Kaukehmen, or what sort of a speech Herr —— has spouted to his political friends, or what is the family name of the new Governor of Koenigsberg? It would be far better and more useful to do as the English press does, that is, to deal almost exclusively with home affairs in a practical and thoroughgoing spirit. Thus the public is really kept well-informed, and is enabled to form an opinion upon matters of some importance to it."

During the debate on the Penal Laws (February 9, 1876) the Chancellor called attention to the prejudice frequently caused to public welfare by the press, and with reference to the evil effects produced by the dissemination of fabricated and distorted news, observed:—"I refer particularly to the perversion of facts in connection with peace and war. Permit me, in a few words, to recall the war-lies which, for twelve years past and even longer, have troubled anxious spirits and materially contributed to the injury of trade. In 1863 a Belgian journal reported that the talk of Berlin was a new Quadruple Alliance of Prussia, France, Italy and Sweden, ultimately to be joined by Denmark at the price of Schleswig-Holstein's definitive cession to that kingdom.

Sweden was to obtain Finland; Poland her 1772 frontiers; Italy, Venice; France, Mayence, Cologne and perhaps Brussels; Prussia the whole of Germany and perhaps Holland. That report was the origin of all the worry we have since undergone upon the subject of Holland, a country extremely friendly to us. The lie in question was served up again and again, year after year, by a great many newspapers. But that was not all. In 1871, to the best of my remembrance, the Polish journals (which have always gloated over the prospect of war between Russia and Germany) averred that we were resolved to deprive Russia of her Baltic provinces. Shortly afterwards we were calumniously accused of intending to make war upon Austria; and the culminating point was reached last spring by warlike clamours, prompted by a few newspaper articles, which were listened to with an amount of credulity surpassing the limits of the marvellous. . . . I ascribe the present slackness of business in great measure to the misrepresentations of the newspapers with relation to the probabilities of war. But the chief fault lies with the gullibility and sensational proclivities of the German reader, who declines to peruse serious, practical and instructive articles upon home subjects, which ought to be of paramount interest to him. Nobody wants to read such articles, and the editorial staffs of journals do not want to write them, because they have to be written with care and pains. German newspapers are bound to be amusing reading, to be glanced over whilst drinking a mug full of beer, and to furnish topics of lively conversation, more especially about something that has taken place a long way off, in foreign parts. To my mind, the papers busy themselves far too much with foreign affairs."

"Credulous people on 'Change suffer prejudice by these

false reports, which is bad enough; but war is never brought about by newspaper articles. In modern times polemics have not led to wars; and even the 1870 war, with which the press appeared to have a good deal to do, was not the outcome of journalism, but of the Imperial Camarilla. Anybody who holds the articles that appeared in non-official papers—I refer more particularly to the *Post*—responsible for the panic affecting the Bourse here last year, is in error. I never knowingly caused an article to be written for the *Post;* least of all the one headed 'War in Sight.' But I did not object to that article; for I hold that when it is generally felt that a minority is egging the country on to war, people cannot make too great a noise, in order to attract the majority's attention; for, as a rule, the majority does not incline towards war, which is brought on by minorities, or, in Absolutist States, by the Sovereign or the Cabinet. He, however, who first shouts 'Fire!' cannot be suspected of incendiarism. Were a Minister bent upon urging the country to war in an utterly groundless cause, he would scarcely begin by kicking up a row in the press, for that would be to summon the Fire-Brigade. Last spring circumstances occurred highly illustrative of the public credulity which I so emphatically condemn; amongst others, that certain diplomatists, in the habit of supplying newspaper correspondents with intelligence and ideas, drew their water from dirty wells, and, for lack of experience, were convinced of its limpidity; and that persons of sufficiently high social standing to be brought into contact with political circles, made statements which were incorrect, because those persons were not well-informed enough to have formed a political judgment; or impartial enough, possibly, to entertain a favourable opinion of the German Empire. . . . There are persons in very high positions

who pass for political oracles, without being officially qualified for that character, and who conduct their correspondence with a seeming of officiality and credibility, having no right whatsoever to do so. . . . Business suffers from another variety of the press, which I may designate as journalism working in obscurity, or by the light of a dark lantern. The weekly paper supplied to poor and ignorant people who have no means of testing the barefaced lies printed therein—the paper which is read by the impoverished and discontented classes of the population—finds it easy enough to work upon the common man (who knows only too well that he is badly off) in such sort that he fancies he can mitigate his own need permanently by labouring less and relying more upon the assistance of his fellow-citizens; that it is feasible, in fact, to work less and enjoy more than is prescribed by the common law of supply and demand. This sort of journalism has materially harmed us and thrown us back; the Social-Democratic agitation has largely contributed to the creation of the business depression under which we are suffering; it has undoubtedly raised the price and lowered the quality of German labour, and is responsible for the fact that the German working day is not so productive as that of France or England. The French operative does more work in a day, and better than the German; we have fallen off in our workmanship, and have consequently ceased to be capable of competition."

That the press has its merits, despite the above and other shortcomings; that it does a great deal of good in exposing wrongs and pointing out the means of remedying them; that it supplies prompt intelligence, and is an excellent medium through which, in case of conflicts with foreign countries, to give expression to and stimulate national feeling, cannot be denied; and that it is a political

power, for good and evil, is demonstrated by the fact that every Government utilises it to enlighten or correct public opinion. To this rule the greatest of living Statesmen is no exception. The chiefs of the Roman Church are fully aware what influence is exercised by newspapers, and there are political journalists of strongly marked vocation and talent amongst the more exalted Catholic clergy. The late Bishop von Ketteler was an industrious writer in the press; he once remarked:—"If St Peter were on earth nowadays, he would certainly found a newspaper."

Bismarck, besides utilising the press vicariously, used to write for it himself before he took office. He supplied articles for many years to the *Neue Preussische Zeitung*, which he partly founded. "How often," says Hesekiel, "has he occupied a place at that huge circular table round which so many distinguished men used to sit, and written down his thoughts in the firm large and close characters peculiar to him."

During his sojourn in Frankfort, he busied himself eagerly with press work; according to Hesekiel he did little else there, until he was appointed to the rank of Minister. Poschinger states that Bismarck was instructed by Manteuffel to utilize the Frankfort papers in connection with commercial questions then pending. Later on, also, he devoted a portion of his leisure to writing in the newspapers. On Nov. 7, 1851 he wrote to Manteuffel:—"I shall not fail to watch Herr Hock's doings, and to expose the real state of the case in the press, quite unreservedly and in various forms and directions." Later on, (Dec. 22) he requested the Minister "to supply the home press with more material for throwing light upon the policy of the Federal Diet, and to give Prussian newspapers the rein." During the summer of 1852, he prepared a pamphlet intituled, "Shall the

German Customs' Union be destroyed? A Voice from the South," of which 1000 copies were printed and sent to the most influential manufacturers, farmers and tradesmen in Southern Germany. On the 6th Sept. 1852 (*àpropos* of a newspaper dispute about the Zollverein) he announced to Manteuffel that he had forwarded letters to the *Frankfurter Journal* and the *Schwaebische Merkur*, as well as to seven other journals appearing in Hesse, Nassau, Baden, Bavaria and Wuertemberg. "Should contradictions appear in the South German press," he continued, "I will take care that they are properly answered." (Here follow several further illustrations of his journalistic activity in Southern Germany, which may be omitted without any prejudice to the interest of this work.—Translator's Note).

In January 1854 accident put the Prussian Government in possession of Prokesch's autographic correspondence with agents of the press respecting the organisation of an anti-Prussian agitation in the German press, as well as several drafts (also in the Baron's handwriting) of vigorous anti-monarchical newspaper articles. Manteuffel asked Bismarck how this discovery might be most advantageously utilised. The latter replied:—"My plan of operations would be to publish these documents in some independent journal, as if they were in private hands, summing up their actual contents in one or more articles. Perhaps the *Preussisches Wochenblatt* would be the most suitable paper, should your Excellency think fit to trust any one of the members of its editorial staff. The publication of Herr von Prokesch's transactions with his agents cannot fail to produce a powerful reaction in public opinion against philo-Austrian articles. . . . I am decidedly of opinion that the Government should feign to have had its attention called to the documents in question for the first time by

their publication in the manner above suggested, and to have subsequently acquired official cognizance of their original source. They may then be further utilised to make Prokesch feel insecure in his position, by confidentially acquainting our other Confederates with the whole matter in such a way as to exhibit our patience and long-suffering in the most favourable light. It would also be advisable that the Cabinet of Vienna should learn (indirectly and extra-officially) that we have in our hands convincing proofs of the attacks—hitherto steadfastly denied—which Austria has made upon us in the press, and of the animosity towards the august person of His Majesty the King which has inspired those attacks."

How watchfully Bismarck observed the utterances of the Prussian press whilst he was at Frankfort may be gathered from the concluding paragraph of his report of July 25, 1854. "I cannot forbear from pointing out that of late Austrian views have been set forth to a greater extent than was formerly the case in Prussian newspapers, whose Austrian correspondents have obtained insertion therein of statements distinctly hostile to Prussia. This is the more to be deplored because there is not a single journal in the whole Austrian press that represents Prussian interests. I may observe with respect to the *Zeit* that its correspondent here is in the service of Herr von Prokesch, and writes his articles at the dictation of that gentleman's agents." On Sept. 30 Bismarck wrote a report upon the anti-Prussian *Frankfurter Postzeitung*, of which Prokesch and the Austrian Councillor of Legation, Braun, were *collaborateurs*, and which, rejoicing in the protection of Austria and the Prince of Tour and Taxis, was altogether reckless in its utterances. A week later he forwarded to Manteuffel an article of the *Frankfurter Journal* "justifying Count Buol's

policy in the Eastern Question and vehemently attacking the German Governments and Statesmen. I am assured" he added "upon absolutely trustworthy authority that this article was sent to the editor by the Austrian Chancellerie under its own official seal."

In a private letter to Manteuffel (Dec. 8, 1854) Bismarck subsequently complained of the unpatriotic attitude of Prussian newspapers, observing:—"The utter lack of honour-loving patriotism evinced by a portion of our home press in this crisis is humiliating to every Prussian. If I had anything to say in the matter I would allow greater freedom to the newspapers with respect to internal affairs, but would inexorably insist that the foreign policy of the Government should not only not be attacked but should be supported by every Prussian journal, and that any newspaper printing a single comma against it should be suppressed without further notice. This method of enforcing patriotism would not, I believe, be disapproved of by public opinion." Later on (Feb. 3, 1855) he wrote to his chief: "I cannot leave unnoticed the painful impression made abroad by the circumstance that (in such a crisis as the present, and considering Austria's behaviour towards us) Prussian newspaper, such as the *Spenersche* and *Koelnische* should lend themselves for money or party objects to support Austria's cause against our own: I am sure that it would be welcome to all loyal people at home were the Government to check so dishonourable a lack of patriotism." He subsequently urged his chief to officially request the Frankfort Senate to exercise stricter supervision over the local press of that city and even to take proceedings against it; and subsequently (Oct. 29, 1857) called attention to the agitation got up by the *Frankfurter Zeitung* against Prussia and the Evangelical Church, recommending the prohibition of that journal in

Prussia as a measure approved of even by moderate Catholics who regarded the preservation of confessional peace as paramountly desirable.

Shortly before his recall from Frankfort Bismarck wrote a report upon the *Postzeitung*, a journal inspired by the Austrian Press Bureau, to the Prince Regent, as follows:—"The argumentative articles in this paper (no matter from what place they are stated to have reached it) are either written in Vienna by Baron Max von Gagern and Herr von Biegeleben, or here under the direction of the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires, Braun—by the Liechtenstein Federal Envoy D. von Linde and the ex-priest Juergens, an agent of the Vienna Press-Bureau. These two last-named persons hold conferences almost daily with other press-men, and during these meetings the matter for the *Postzeitung*, *Journal de Frankfort* and other Southern German papers dependent upon Austria is prepared. The *Postzeitung*, whatever it may say to the contrary, is an immediate and exclusive organ of the Vienna Cabinet. The recent polemic between it and the Vienna papers concerning Your Royal Highness's Government was merely a presentment of the double aims of Austrian policy, in the form of dialogue, throughout which the articles for and against, i.e. the attacks of the *Postzeitung* upon your Royal Highness, and your defence by the Vienna papers, all emanated from one and the same source.

As Premier and Chancellor, no less than as Federal Envoy, Bismarck turned his attention to the press, and utilised it when he thought fit. How he did so I do not propose to illustrate by any further examples. Suffice it to observe that the hammer and tongs method which is so dear to official writers was as little to his taste as the fidgetiness displayed for several years by that portion of the press

entrusted with the vindication of Government interests. How he wished his relations to the newspaper world to be generally viewed may be gathered from a passage in his speech of Feb. 9, 1876, to which reference has already been made. Having openly pronounced his condemnation of the abuses practised with the word "official," he proceeded as follows:—

"It cannot be denied that every Government—particularly that of a great country—desires the support of the press in its foreign as well as home policy. Nothing, therefore, is more natural than that governments should keep a certain amount of space at their disposal in journals well-affected to them, wherein to put forward views which they do not exactly want to publish in their Official Gazette. Formerly the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* was rendered available to the Prussian Government for this purpose by its proprietors, acting upon their convictions and not asking for any remuneration. The Government took advantage of their offer, and the paper profited largely by its official connection. But what was the consequence? Most people believed that every article appearing in that paper was either written by the Prime Minister or read over by him before publication, so that he could be held responsible for every word of its text; and it was this which compelled me to forego the pleasure of promulgating my opinions extra-officially in the press. The Minister gives instructions to his secretary, who imparts them to the newspaper: and the result of the connection thus established is that items of intelligence are sometimes communicated to the journal in question, not at the immediate instance of the Minister, but quite permissibly and correctly. Thenceforth, no matter what editorial padding may be inserted in such a newspaper—even if it should only have received a single

official *communiqué*—it is spoken of as 'an organ closely related to Government circles' 'a journal notoriously supplied with official intelligence,' and, in the French papers, as '*la feuille de M. de Bismarck*'—which lends its statements as much authority as if they had appeared in the *Staatsanzeiger*. Serious inconveniences, however, accrue from attributing an official character to announcements which really possess none; a proceeding sometimes the outcome of error, but more frequently of sheer ill-will and desire to cast discredit upon the governmental policy. Very often it is the writer's chief object to impart extra weight to his own views by describing as 'official' the statements he contradicts; but for which, the reading public would fail to understand why he takes the trouble to refute a mere invention. But by signalising that invention as 'official' he enters into a personal controversy with the Chancellor and adds to his own importance. There is no conceivable piece of stupidity which has not been imputed to me in this manner by the simple word 'official'; wherefore I take this opportunity of positively declaring that the Foreign Office does not own an official paper, and does not impart official communications to any paper. I admit the inconvenience of being unable to make known my views to public opinion otherwise than through the *Staatsanzeiger*, or sometimes through a recognised official organ, the *Provinzial Korrespondenz*; but thus, at least, I am sure that no cuckoo's eggs will be laid in my nest, and that I can only be held answerable for what I myself (or one of my colleagues) have said."

"It is extremely easy to impart an official aspect to an article containing statements which everybody knows a newspaper editor or correspondent could not possibly have got at on his own account, inasmuch as they could

only have emanated from an official source. If statements of this kind appear simultaneously in two or three papers, it becomes obvious to every outsider who knows nothing about the business that they must be the outcome of an official *communiqué*. Neither is that assumption altogether incorrect; only the statements in question are not official as far as the German Empire in concerned—they emanate from foreign correspondents and diplomatists. It is a great convenience to a Legation in any country to have a newspaper correspondent, or several such, in tow, who says: 'If you want anything put into the newspaper, tell it to me. I want no money; all I ask for is news.' If such a correspondent is upon really intimate terms with a Legation, obliging it from time to time by defending or advocating some matter which it has at heart, the Envoy (when not supplied with funds for these purposes, or when the correspondent declines to take money) is ready enough to furnish him with news—the material, in fact, for an apparently 'official' article, of which everybody who reads it will naturally say 'The Government must have dictated this, for no one else could know it; besides, were it not official it would not appear in three or four papers at once;' the truth being that a smart correspondent, connected with diplomatic circles, can easily obtain employment on several newspapers simultaneously. There would be no objection to such an arrangement if the news thus disseminated were always correct. As the Envoy, however, never tells a person of that sort all he knows, but only what he wishes to to be publicly known and believed, this sort of 'official' journalism is frequently very prejudicial to a government."

(Some lengthy and severe diatribes pronounced by the Chancellor with relation to Socialism and the local Berlin press are here omitted as possessing no interest, even of a

retrospective character, for the English reader.—Translator's Note.)

In the course of a debate in the Reichstag on the Press Laws (June 16, 1873) Prince Bismarck propounded his standpoint as follows :—" The last speaker very justly called attention to the services rendered by the press. But there are two sides to every question. All sorts of views, shades of opinion and convictions are entertained by the population of a country. There are perhaps a hundred thousand people whose interest and desire it is that the press should be as independent, free and easy as possible. But there are also, maybe, many more than a hundred thousand who regard the further emancipation of the press with mistrustful anxiety. But these classes have an equal right to consideration, as well as to express their views in the form of projects of law. It is, moreover, the Government's duty to contemplate the question in both its aspects, and to give the general public the opportunity of deciding in favour of one or the other system. Above all I would beg you not to lay down the hard and fast rule that it is a virtue to advocate an unrestricted press, and a vice to oppose it: and not to stigmatise every governmental attempt to protect those who are of a different opinion as an outrage upon the people's rights. To me the question of how far press freedom may be developed and encouraged on the one hand, and of what protection shall be accorded to persons attacked by the press, on the other, appears of no greater gravity than that of Free Trade v. Protection. Let us, therefore, not begin by hurling reproaches at one another as though it were disgraceful or contemptible to take either view of this particular question."

Upon that occasion, Deputy Lasker observed that " the rights of the people were in question," and Bismarck

replied :—"All the gentlemen who sit in this House are representatives of the people. I, too, participate in the rights of the people. We are all the people—not those gentlemen exclusively who represent pretensions traditionally reputed to be Liberal, but which sometimes are far from being so. I do not see why one law should have the credit of concerning the people's rights, and another not. I maintain that we all are the people, and so is the government, too; why should I allow the government to be excluded from the privileges of the people, and to my disadvantage? This practice of attributing a specially popular character to some special aim, and of ascribing hostility or even indifference to the people to everything that the Government does, is a subversive tendency, gentlemen, and one which I was by no means prepared for in Deputy Lasker, or the party to which he belongs, judging the latter by the part it has hitherto taken in founding and consolidating the Empire."

To obtain still more accurate cognizance of Bismarck's views with regard to the freedom of the press, we must go back to his Press Regulations of July 1, 1863. They were strongly condemned at the time, but were absolutely necessary in order to protect State welfare against a class of journalism which assailed it with unmeasured violence. The Government was being attacked daily, in the bitterest and most vehement terms, because it did not accede to the unjustifiable demands of the Liberal Party. The Democratic press stimulated the prevailing agitation unremittingly; and the prescriptions of the 1851 Press Law were inadequate to the situation, as they did not enable the tribunals to deal effectively with journalistic demagogues, who, on their part, conducted their campaign in such sort that the magistrates could not pin them to any overt breach

of the law. In this manner several papers widely circulated amongst the lower classes daily disseminated statements and views which embittered public feeling and undermined political morality. The Government's means of contending against its journalistic assailants were insufficient, inasmuch as the organs devoted to it were not so generally read as the Democratic press. It could only check the excesses of the Opposition journals if empowered to call them to account for their behaviour in general, and thus compel them to alter it.

The report made to the King by the Ministry collectively upon the measures called for under the circumstances, indicated those measures as "fully justified by the Constitution of January 31, 1850," and pointed out that they would "in no wise restrict the free expression of opinion thereby allowed to His Majesty's subjects. The condemnable extravagances of an unbridled press will be restrained; and the liberty of the press will be re-established upon the basis of morality and self-respect, in which alone it can strike root firmly and flourish."

This opinion was endorsed by equitable and impartial persons; even the Liberal Prussian Annuals, although they opposed the Press Regulations, admitted the Government "had the welfare of the country most earnestly at heart," and that ministers were steadfastly keeping in view Prussia's honour, happiness and greatness. There could be no doubt that the measures taken against the press were dictated by a sincere desire to serve the Crown and country, and that their main object was to restore agitated and mislead spirits to order, legality and moderation.

The Press Regulations had been decreed without the co-operation of the Legislature, which was not assembled at the time. But Ministers were perfectly justified by law in

promulgating them, for the Constitution expressly provided that, in any extraordinary emergency, the government was entitled to take such measures, in the absence of the Diet, as should not be manifestly unconstitutional, upon condition that it should submit them to the Legislature for approval, when the latter should again be convoked. This condition the Government conscientiously fulfilled. Many were of opinion that it was only under the obligation to lay the regulations before one Chamber at a time (as in the case of other Draft Bills), and would be justified in consulting the other Legislative Body after obtaining the verdict, say, of the Upper House. But the Government submitted its measure to both Houses, simultaneously and without delay, although it knew by the result of the elections that the Lower House would unhesitatingly vote for the revocation of the Regulations. It did so. A large majority of Deputies refused its sanction to the measure in question, and declared that, in promulgating the Press Regulations, the Government had violated the Constitution, no emergency having accrued which justified it in acting independently of the Diet. The Upper House, however thought differently, and declared, by 77 votes to 8, that the Regulations had not only been justified by circumstances, but had produced a highly salutary effect by tranquillizing the country; and that it thanked the Government for enacting them. They were, however, revoked at once; having, meanwhile, to some extent effected their object.

It is, of course, obvious that the Prime Minister of a great State stands in need of representation and support in the press. It is no less clear and indisputable that, in a more or less bureaucratically organised State entity, journalism favourable to the Government must be carried on, at least partly, by officials, its cost being defrayed out of the

public purse. The Prime Minister, therefore, must have at his disposal at least one influential journal besides his official press-organ. As matters stand, however, it also appears desirable and allowable that information and views emanating from Governmental circles should reach public cognizance through the medium of the independent press. The Government is only doing its duty by exercising as much influence as possible upon public opinion; and no journal is compelled to assist it in so doing, but is acting in accordance with the dictates of its own free will when it accords a place in its columns to any official article. Inspiration and information, however, should not (as has often been the case) reach newspapers from several different quarters, independent of and sometimes opposed to one another; but from one central point in the immediate vicinity of the leading statesmen. The action of the governmental press must be as uniform as that of diplomacy. Unless it be so it produces bewilderment, and leaves the public in a state of uncertainty, save in one solitary respect; viz.: that dissension prevails amongst the chiefs of the different State departments.

CHAPTER V.

THE CHANCELLOR AND STATE-SOCIALISM.

THE ideas, projects and measures which are customarily spoken of as "the Chancellor's State-Socialism" are the results of experience. They were suggested and developed by the degeneration of the German working-men's agitation into Social-Democratic hostility to the State; and they propound two means, namely, repression and reform, of obviating the danger to society of a movement which, at its commencement, was by no means inexplicable or unnatural. Their objects are, on the one hand, to put down the machinations systematically carried on with a view to destroying the State and society; on the other, to improve the condition of the working-classes in such sort that the operative shall recognise the State as his friend.

German Social-Democracy flows in two currents, which ultimately amalagamate, though their sources are wide apart. One of these streams took its origin in Lassalle and Von Schweitzer; the other in Marx, Liebknecht and Bebel. The former recognised the State and craved its assistance; the latter was resolved upon its destruction, and desired to establish an entirely new order of social affairs, more or less Communistic. This is the party which, by reason of its readiness to go any lengths, gradually gained the upper hand of the other, and finally took possession of every

variety of the German operative—of all the working-men, in fact, who take an interest in public life.

Lassalle's championship of the working-classes was due to the circumstance that the Party of Progress, to which his original views had inclined him to belong, failed to understand his ideas or to gratify his ambition. In that political clique he—a man of vast learning, a profound thinker, in every way an extraordinary being—had to do with a crew of mediocrities, as ignorant as they were pretentious. They were afraid of his impetuous efforts to obtain recognition; when he treated Constitutional questions as questions of might, and advised them to act accordingly, they did not know what he meant. So he turned his attention to the operative masses, with the project of organizing them as a party and leading them himself into the Constitutional fray. The working-men's enormous numbers appeared to him to constitute a power which must eventually carry all before it; and the sound common-sense which he attributed to that class of the people, leagued with and led by men of higher intelligence and culture, was in his opinion destined to open up a new future to the people. The first item in his programme (addressed to the Committee of the Leipzig Operatives' Club in March, 1863) was the so-called "Inflexible Wages-Law," in virtue of which (and guided by the influence of demand and supply) the standard of wages was to be regulated by the minimum of popular requirements for supporting and propagating human life; the attempt being made to prove, with the aid of statistics, that the law in question would bear upon about 90 per cent. of the population of Prussia. Lassalle also asserted that self-help, as recommended by Schultze-Delitzsch, was inadequate to ameliorate the condition of the working-man, and demanded a State subvention

for the establishment of productive-associations, which by degrees should comprehend all the operative classes, and indicated universal suffrage as the only means of legally attaining that object. He took up this enterprise with his accustomed energy; but its result did not fulfil his high-flying expectations. He accepted the presidency of of the Workmen's General Association in the hope that his programme would produce as great an effect as did Luther's doctrines in 1517, and that the Association would speedily become an irresistible power. He yielded to the illusion that it would give rise to a movement as mighty as that which had caused the abolition of the Corn-Laws in England. Nothing of the sort came to pass. It is true that, amongst the working-men, he found a few thousand enthusiastic followers, who revered and worshipped him as if he had been the Messiah; but the vast majority of the operatives either treated him with coldness or absolutely repelled him. The Liberal papers, then almost without exception in the service of the Manchester school, attacked him and his doctrines with their sharpest weapons; the well-to-do classes and the scientists would have nothing to do with his enterprise, although such men as Rodbertus were not averse to his programme. He suffered disappointments even in the circle he had formed around himself, for it lacked the intelligence and disinterestedness with which he had credited it.

His attitude towards the doctrines and actions of the Party of Progress, which wielded considerable influence during the period of conflict, had no doubt a great deal to do with his failure. He was a fervent partisan of the State, an eager opponent of individualism, and an uncompromising Prussian patriot; he had recognised Bismarck's importance early in his career. In March 1864 he said: "The most

vigorous diplomacy is that which does not need to make a secret of its justifiability, being founded upon iron necessity. I predict to you that a year will not pass before Herr von Bismarck shall have played the part of Peel, and universal direct suffrage will be granted to us." He designated the Frankfort Congress of Princes "a Federalistic intrigue." When he held a review of his Rhenish disciples in September, 1863, he exclaimed, "The Progressists are coquetting with the Princes in order to alarm Herr von Bismarck; such are the man uvres of those wretched creatures! Even should we exchange musket-shots with Herr von Bismarck, common justice would compel us, whilst firing at him, to admit that he is a man, whilst the Progressists are old women. And old women have never yet cowed a man, especially by casting sheep's-eyes in other directions." About the same time he wrote angrily to one of his envoys, who wanted to raise volunteer corps for Duke Frederick in Kiel: "We cannot possibly fight for the legitimate succession of the House of Augustenburg. Is it national to add a thirty-fourth to the existing thirty-three German Princes?" Is that your yearning for German Unity? He added that the only sensible solution of the Schleswig-Holstein question was the incorporation of the Elbe Duchies in Prussia.

These utterances caused Lassalle to appear to his Progressist adversaries as a Government agent and instrument of reaction; although his incessant persecution by the Prussian State Attornies should have sufficiently proved the groundlessness of that view, it was ultimately adopted by Lassalle's own followers. He was a friend of Lothar Bucher, who had also turned his back upon the Party of Progress and entered the Prussian Foreign Office. He was also in correspondence with such Conservative writers as

Huber. Wagener took occasion to speak, in the Diet, of the new movement as a "sign of the times" and to open the columns of the *Kreuzzeitung* to its leader. These were the only incidents which could have given rise to the assumptions above alluded to.

But no, people said—they were not the only ones; Lassalle had been received by Bismarck in person, had been made acquainted with his projects, had served him and been supported by him in return. How much truth there was in all this, and how much error or invention, let the Chancellor himself tell us. Deputy Bebel informed the Reichstag on Sept. 16, 1878 that in 1862 a certain Eichler, commissioned by the Prussian Government, and in particular by Herr von Bismarck, had offered to the Committee of the Leipzig Workmen's Association a considerable sum of money in aid of its objects. The Chancellor replied:—"The elder members of this House know that I accepted office on Sept. 23, 1862—in the last week, therefore, of the month during which I am supposed to have entrusted Eichler with this mission. I had just returned from abroad after an absence of I know not how many years, during which I had no opportunity to occupy myself with home politics, far less with a man so insignificant as Eichler. At that time I did not even know of his existence; and yet it was then—when I had just been transferred from the comfortable calm of diplomacy to a hot contest with the Diet, when I had to attend Committees every evening, when, so to speak, I was glad if I could keep up my Ministerial life, when I had to enlist colleagues, and to return to Paris in order to take my leave of the French Court—then it was I say, that I am supposed to have instructed Herr Eichler to undertake a special mission on my behalf. Eichler lied if he said he had received instructions from me; such a

thing at any rate was absolutely impossible during the very week in which I became a Minister. All I remember is that he subsequently preferred claims to me for services which he had never rendered . . . It just occurs to me that Herr Eichler was employed by the police, and in that capacity made some reports which came to my knowledge, but police matters were not in my special department, and I never held any direct intercourse with people of that sort. None of his reports, however, related to the Social-Democratic party; they had to do with the secret transactions of the Progressists and, if I be not mistaken, of the National Association. That was the only affair with which I ever heard of the man's name being connected. Furthermore, I can assure you that I had never had any business transaction with a Social-Democrat in my life, nor a Social-Democrat with me; for I do not reckon Lassalle as belonging to that category—his was a much nobler character than that of any of his satellites—he was a remarkable man, with whom one could converse . . . With respect to the fabulous statement that I was at that time inclined to enter into a league with the Socialists against the Party of Progress, anybody who remembers those days will recollect that it was my policy, during the winter of 1862-3 to come to terms with the Diet, not to combat it . . . And about the sixty or eighty thousand thalers I am supposed to have supplied to Eichler, where should I have got them from, seeing that we have no Secret Service Fund? The whole Eichler business never existed at all; and I request Deputy Bebel to inform the person who crammed him with it that he is simply a liar."

"Then Lassalle made his appearance, and again the Government made strenuous efforts to enter into relations with him—not he with them—the negotiations being

undertaken by a Prince of the Blood Royal and Countess Hatzfeldt." This made me laugh when I read it; even in Democratic circles they cannot make up a story without a certain amount of padding filched from aristocratic society. In this particular narrative are introduced a Royal Prince, a Countess and an Ambassador; they give an air of reality to the piece, like scenery and decorations, and emphasize its importance to the spectator, who is too ignorant to test its authenticity. I am sorry that the Royal Prince (there are plenty of them) was not pointed out to Deputy Bebel somewhat more clearly. If he would just mind asking his informant for more details on that point, it would be historically interesting to learn which Prince it really was of the six or eight who were alive at that time. Until he shall do so, however, I must take leave to deny the incident. I, at least, required no princely assistance to get at Lassalle, or bring him to me; and I have not the honour to be acquainted with Countess Hatzfeldt, whom I last saw in the year 1835 at the house of her brother-in-law. All the assertions, therefore, are pure inventions *in usum* of silly people, but which should not have been brought forward in an assembly of this character. Lassalle himself was extremely desirous to know me personally, and, if I had time to rummage amongst my old papers, I believe I could find his letters begging me to gratify that desire, which I made no difficulty about doing. I met him and talked with him for an hour, and have never regretted doing so. I did not see him three times a week, as has been stated, but perhaps thrice altogether. It was out of the question that our intercourse should assume the character of a political negotiation. What could Lassalle have offered to me? He had nothing behind him . . . In all political negotiations the *do, ut des* is an essential feature, even if kept in the

background and not alluded to by well-bred negotiators. But when one of them is obliged to say, 'Poor devil that I am, what have I to offer?' He had nothing to give me in my Ministerial capacity. But he had something which was extremely attractive to me as a private person; for he was one of the cleverest and most agreeable men I ever met —a man of lofty ambition, by no means a Republican, but animated by strongly marked national and monarchical feelings. His ideal, which he strove to realize, was the German Empire. This was a point of contact between us. Possibly he was in doubt whether the German Empire should be swayed by the Hohenzollern dynasty or the Lassalle dynasty; but he was a Monarchist to the back bone. He ought to have thundered out a "Quos ego" to his pitiful satellites, who now claim to have been his equals; he ought to have contemptuously hurled them back into their original nullity and put it out of their power to take his name in vain. Lassallé was an energetic and singularly intelligent man, to converse with whom was highly instructive; our conversations lasted for hours at a stretch and I was always sorry when they came to an end. There was no question at all of negotiations, for I had but little to say during these interviews; he alone kept up the conversation, and did so in the delightful manner which all those who knew him will remember. I regret that his position and my own did not permit me to associate with him more intimately; I should have been delighted to have a man of such gifts and *esprit* as a neighbour in the country." . . . .

"It is extremely difficult to discuss this subject," (the Social-Democratic "Realm of the Future"), "while we are groping about in darkness, like the ordinary audience at a Social-Democratic meeting, who know nothing at all about the matter, but are assured that 'better times are

coming,' and that 'there will be more to earn and less to work.' Where the 'more' money is to come from, nobody knows; I mean, when every well-to-do person shall have been robbed of his property in order that it shall be divided amongst his despoilers. Then, in all probability, the laborious and thrifty will again wax wealthy, whilst the lazy and extravagant will fall into poverty; or if everybody is to be supplied with the needful by an administration, people will come to lead the lives of prisoners, shut up in gaols, none of whom follow occupations of their own choice, but work under the compulsion of the warders. In gaol, too, there is at least an official in charge, who is a trustworthy and respectable person; but who will play the warder in the Universal Socialistic House of Correction? Probably the speechifyers, who gain over the masses by their eloquence. There will be no appeal against them; they will be the most merciless of tyrants, and all the others will be their slaves. . . . I do not think that anybody would care about living in such a state of things. None of these gentlemen has frankly put forward a positive programme; were they to describe the future as they really wish to organise it, every perspicuous operative would laugh in their faces. They do not want to make themselves ridiculous; hence we hear nothing of a definitive programme, but only of the negation of whatever actually exists. But all this has never prevented me from keeping a warm heart and an open ear for the intelligent aspirations of Social-Democracy, and for the amelioration of the lot of the working classes. What Lassalle told me on the subject was most interesting and instructive; for he knew a great deal about it."

"Our conversation turned upon Universal Suffrage; but its realization by State authority was never mooted. Such

a monstrous idea never occurred to me in my life. I accepted Universal Suffrage, but with repugnance, as a Frankfort tradition. I have little faith in the practicality of any particular electoral system; nor is it easy for anybody to believe in one more than in another, for we have seen them work side-by-side in our own country. Here we have, for instance, a Parliament elected by Universal Suffrage, and a Diet which is the outcome of quite another electoral system. Many of you, gentlemen, are members of both Assemblies, and can consequently form a judgment respecting the working of the two systems in one country. . . . I do not propose to draw any conclusion, not wishing to make myself disagreeable to the Diet or to flatter the Reichstag; but I prefer having to do with the results of Universal Suffrage here, in spite of the excrescences we have to thank it for. . . . Perhaps, too, our electors will become more judgmatical in time and will cease to accord implicit credence to whatever their deputies or candidates may asseverate to the disadvantage of the Government. Perhaps the elector will then read more than one newspaper, and will acquire confidence in leading men whom he now despises. I have as yet nothing to take back in this matter, although I give due consideration to all the arguments that attribute all our ills to Universal Suffrage. I only say that I am not convinced, though willing to be so; and that I do not consider it a crime to have talked about Universal Suffrage with a clever man."

"Similarly, I am by no means yet convinced that the notion of subventioning productive associations by the State is an objectionable one. It has seemed to me—perhaps the impression was conveyed to me by Lassalle's reasonings, or perhaps by my experiences in England, during my stay there in 1862—that a possibility of im-

proving the working man's lot might be found in the establishment of productive associations, such as exist and flourish in England. I have talked over the subject with the King, who has the interests of the working classes closely at heart, and His Majesty paid a sum of money out of his own pocket in aid of an experiment in that direction connected with a deputation of operatives from Silesia, who had lost their employment through differing from their employer in politics. . . . To attempt anything of the sort upon a large scale might entail an expenditure of hundreds of millions; but the notion does not seem to me intrinsically an absurd or silly one. We make experiments in agriculture and manufactures; might it not be as well to do so with respect to human occupations and the solution of the social question? . . . I may be reproached with not having achieved a satisfactory result; but the matter was not in my department—I had no time to attend to it—warlike complications accrued and our foreign policy became abnormally active. The merits or demerits of the notion cannot be judged by an experiment made upon a small scale; perhaps on a larger one it could not be carried out at all. Such establishments as that of Krupp, for instance, could not possibly exist under a republican *régime*. . . . It may be that the confidence of German workmen in one another and their employers is not so great as the English associations prove it to be in England. But I cannot understand why I am reproached for making the experiment above alluded to, not with public money, but with funds supplied by His Majesty out of his Privy Purse."

"I now come to the question when and why I gave up troubling myself about these matters, and chiefly when my attitude changed towards the social, or rather, Social-

Democratic question. It was at the moment when Deputy Bebel or Deputy Liebknecht—I do not remember which of the two—in a pathetic appeal to the Reichstag held up the French Commune as the model of political institutions, and openly avowed the creed professed by the Parisian assassins and incendiaries. Thenceforth I clearly perceived the extent of the danger threatening us. In the meantime I had been away at the scene of war and had paid no attention to things of that kind; but the invocation of the Commune opened my eyes to what we had to expect, and I instantly recognised the fact that Social-Democracy is an enemy against whom the State and society are bound to defend themselves."

These remarks prompt us to consider the second division of German Social-Democracy; from the amalgamation of which with the first (hitherto dealt with in this chapter) the actual Social-Democratic Party resulted. After Lassalle's death (August 31, 1864) the Association founded by him was managed for some time by a set of incapable and discordant people, and would probably have died out quietly had it not been kept alive by its cleverly edited press-organ, the *Sozialdemokrat.* Universal suffrage, which followed our national victories hard on heel, imported new life into the operative agitation; and when the Association (May, 1867) acquired an energetic and intelligent president in the person of Herr von Schweitzer, who had a special talent for organisation, it made manifest progress. Not that the number of its members increased; on the contrary, it had diminished from 4600 to 3000; but round this nucleus a party grouped itself which had supplied 40,000 votes to Socialist candidates at the September elections. This party grew rapidly, and by degrees succeeded in converting a great many Berlin workmen to Lassalle's

programme who had thitherto (with few exceptions) adhered to the Party of Progress.

Meanwhile a fraction of this party—led by persons who were under the influence of Countess Hatzfeldt—had quitted it; an event of no great importance, as the secession was not due to any new political creed, but to motives connected with Countess Hatzfeldt's domineering disposition and bad temper, which soon rendered the female line of Lassalle's dynasty utterly ridiculous by reason of its representative's incapacity and vanity.

Of far greater moment was a clique of Social-Democrats made up of Communists, who had for some time followed Lassalle's flag, and of anti-Prussianists converted to Communism. The headquarters of this organisation was the Communist Club in London, chiefly composed of Germans, which had published a manifesto to the workmen of all countries in 1848, and was at the head of the International Operatives' Association founded in 1862. The *spiritus rector* of this club was Karl Marx, a man of comprehensive economic knowledge, penetrating intellect and strict consistency in his views—a cold, bitter, insidious fanatic. His apostle in Germany was Wilhelm Liebknecht. The profession of faith of this sect is contained in the 1848 manifesto drawn up by Marx, and runs as follows:—"Modern State-power is only a committee that administers the affairs of the *bourgeoisie* in general. The *bourgeoisie* has played a highly revolutionary part in history, having destroyed all feudal and patriarchal relations, and left no bond existing between man and men but bare interest—insensible ready-money transactions (*baare Zahlung*). It has substituted a conscienceless Free Trade for countless recorded and well earned liberties. The workman's outlay is well-nigh restricted to the necessaries that are indispen-

sable to his mere existence and reproduction of his species." (Here we see that Lassalle borrowed his "inflexible Wages-Law" from Marx.) "The Communists are distinguished from all other Operative Parties by the facts that they defend the common interests of the working-class, independently of nationality, and that they represent the interests of the general movement throughout the successive stages of development through which the struggle between operatives and capitalists must pass. "The Communists' immediate object is that of the other proletarian parties, namely, the overthrow of the capitalists' domination by the acquisition of political power." The means to this end, according to Marx, were: 1. The abolition of private property in land; 2. The concentration of credit and means of communication in the hands of the State; 3. The establishment of national workshops; 4. The cultivation of all agricultural districts upon an uniform system; 5. The gratuitous education of all children, also upon an uniform system. The manifesto concluded with these words:—"Let the ruling classes tremble before a Communistic Revolution, in which the proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains, whilst they have the whole world to win. Proletarians of all countries, unite!"

The Communist League, which subsequently formed the nucleus of the *Internationale*, is further characterised in the address issued to the world at large by the "Central Board" from London in March, 1850, e.g.:—"In opposition to the democratic petty *bourgeoisie*, which desires to bring the Revolution to a close, to procure better wages and more certain employment for the working-man, and to do so partly with State assistance, it is our interest and duty to make the Revolution permanent, until all the more or less well-to-do classes shall be deprived of power, the State

authority shall be in the hands of the proletariate, and the Association of Proletarians shall have made such progress in all the leading countries of the world that competition with proletarians shall have ceased in those countries, or at least that the predominating productive forces shall be concentrated in the hands of the proletarians. We do not aim at altering the conditions of private property, but at annihilating it—not at hushing up class-contrasts, but at abolishing classes—not at improving existing society, but at founding a new one."

In order to disseminate these views and further these objects Liebknecht came to Berlin, where he frequented the disciples of Lassalle, but acquired no influence. Expelled thence in July 1865 he settled down in Leipzig, where he gave vent to his hatred of Prussia and Particularism in the *Mitteldeutsche Volkszeitung*. In this line of business he was assisted by Bebel, who had theretofore been an opponent of the Socialist movement and an adherent of Schultze-Delitzsch, but belonged to the Democratic "Party of the People." Bebel was president of the Leipzig Workmen's Educational Association, which—in concert with other societies of the same class—constituted a League, the committee of which was permanently established in Leipzig. The consequence of the Liebknecht-Bebel partnership soon became manifest, although neither of those persons as yet ventured upon a direct recommendation of the Marx doctrines. In September, 1865, the League of Workmen's Associations (Bebel being one of its committee-men) declared in favour of universal suffrage at its general meeting in Stuttgart. In May, 1866, the majority of the Associations renounced Schultze-Delitzsch and the Party of Progress. In August, a particularistic-popular programme was adopted at a monster meeting of Saxon workmen in

Chemnitz, and Bebel was elected to the Constituent Reichstag. Next year he and Liebknecht were elected to the first Parliament of the North-German Confederation. They still kept silence as to their Communistic projects; but the cosmo-political revolutionist Liebknecht played the part of a sorrowful patriot with remarkable vigour. "Since your glorious re-organisation was effected," he exclaimed, "foreign countries have rent morsel after morsel away from Germany's body. Every German patriot is plunged into profound grief when he reflects upon the events of last year. But the day will come when you will have to measure your forces against the greater ones of France. The history of the world does not stand still; it will advance over your masterful achievement, the Northern Confederation, which means nothing but the partition, subjugation and weakening of Germany; it will advance over this North German Parliament, which is nothing more than the fig-leaf of of absolutism." Schweitzer answered him: "We do not intend to join Herr Liebknecht, his friends the dispossessed Sovereigns, and envious foreign countries in ruining Prussia and the North-German Confederation. Although we are dissatisfied with our home affairs and wish to see them fundamentally changed, we propose to remain where we are, i.e., within the reconstructed Fatherland; those who stay outside it may do as they choose. That is the difference between them and us; and it is as well that it should be clearly understood in this place."

The Social-Democratic fractions now had five representatives in Parliament, not very active or influential, truly; still, their presence in the House served the purposes of their party amongst the operatives, the majority of whom are accustomed to accept phrases for truths, especially if loudly and harshly uttered. Several other circumstances,

moreover, contributed to further the Social-Democratic cause; amongst others, strikes. The number of members of the German General Workmen's Association, presided over by Schweitzer, was doubled; on the other hand the Communistic agitation gained ground and even invaded the ranks of the Lassalle faction, then led by Frau von Hatzfeldt. At the Association's Diet held at Nuernberg in 1868, in which 111 societies counting 14,000 members were represented, Liebknecht and Bebel ventured to show themselves in their true colours, and the majority of that Assembly adopted the principles of Marx's *Internationale.* On August 7, 1869, the Social-Democratic Workmen's Party met (at the Eisenach Congress, in which 262 delegates represented 150,000 members) and put forward a programme which was a mixture of Radical and Communistic principles. This new party, which subsequently became totally subjected to the influence of Liebknecht and Bebel, demands the "establishment of a free People's State," and binds every one of its members to advocate "the suppression of existing political and social conditions, the achievement of equal rights and duties, the abolition of actual methods of production, the payment to the operative of the full profits upon his work, and political liberty in a democratic State." The "next demands" of this programme are:— "Universal, equal and direct suffrage; direct legislation; abolition of all privileges appertaining to rank, birth and religion; a people's host instead of a standing army; separation of the Church from the State and the schools; obligatory and gratuitous education; independence of the tribunals; establishment of jury and technical arbitrator Courts; public legal proceedings by word of mouth; gratuitous administration of justice; abolition of all press, association and coalition laws; introduction of the normal

working-day; restriction of women's and children's labour; abolition of all indirect taxes; adoption of one progressive Income and Inheritance Tax; State Subvention of Associations, and State credit for free production-associations under Democratic guarantees." This programme was only a provisional one; but, as Liebknecht wrote to a person in his confidence, "it contained the final consequences of Communism." Very few of Lassalle's disciples joined the party at first; but their efforts to break up the Communistic organisation proved unsuccessful.

The year 1870 was not propitious to German Social-Democracy. Its propaganda was paralysed, and national enthusiasm created broad gaps in its ranks. When the elections to the first German Parliament took place in March, 1871, the only Social-Democrat returned was Bebel; and when his fraction held its Congress in August 1871 the number of members had shrunk from 14,000 to 6000. Schweitzer resigned the leadership of the Lassalle section, which was subsequently absorbed into the Communistic faction. The latter consequently gradually augmented, and was materially recruited by the economic conditions that had meanwhile accrued. "The swindling episode of 1872," (writes Nehring) "with its high wages and successful strikes—the *Krach*, with its results of misery and starvation, both reinforced the Social-Democratic ranks very numerously." In the spring of 1874 steps were taken to amalgamate the Lassalle and Communist factions; and they came together at the Gotha Congress (May, 1875) on the basis of a programme avowing pure Communism.

The leaders of the eventually victorious Marx fraction knew very well that they could not attain their aims by legislative means, and only availed themselves of their right to speak in Parliament in order to propagate their projects

among the masses outside. Liebknecht's *Volkstaat* declared in 1874:—"The Social-Democratic party is a revolutionary party. We participate in the elections exclusively with the object of agitating. We only ascend the tribune of the Reichstag in order to speak to the people." "Nothing short of a complete turning upside-down of society as it is," wrote the *Neuer Sozialdemokrat*, "can alleviate the misery of the masses. Our party-press must be the burning torch hurled into the powder-magazine of social suffering, in order to ignite whatever is combustible in the working-class." The *Volksstaat* greeted "the immortal deeds of the Paris Commune as the first glow of the dawning terrible Revolution." "Here, also," prophecied the *Neuer Sozialdemokrat*, "will the naked giant one day crush the panoplied dwarf with his fist." Bebel announced in the Reichstag (April 24, 1871):—"The Paris Commune has displayed a moderation which we should scarcely manifest under similar circumstances in Germany," and a month later, in the same Assembly, he said: "Although Paris is subdued for the moment, let me remind you that the struggle there was only an affair of outposts, and that, ere a very few decades shall have elapsed, the battle cry of the Parisian proletariate 'War to palaces, peace to hovels, death to want and idleness!' will have become the watchword of the whole European proletariate." About that time Marx published a pamphlet containing a fanatical defence and laudation of the Commune. One of the songs sung by the Socialists at their gatherings, "The War-Lay of Mankind," ran thus: "Happy we! the tinder is piled up, the world-torch flares skywards! The battle-sword is brandished, the bullet whistles, all around us is the savage clamour of battle. Hi! see how the thrones tumble down and the holy stools tremble!" Another of these poems says: "I will lie quiet

and wait until other times shall come, when the Germans shall take their destinies into their own hands with vigorous deeds; until, fired by sacred wrath, they shall smite thrones into splinters and drag off the whole brood of tyrants to the guillotine; until the whole pestiferous German swamp of hangmen, sycophants and ruffians shall be rooted out to its last stump with cudgels, knives and daggers."

The Social-Democrats of Liebknecht's party did not care about ameliorating the working man's lot, but about destroying the ruling and proprietary classes with fire and sword. Above all, they were Nihilists, and therefore it became necessary to put them down, in sheer defence of the State and of society at large. A step in that direction was taken in the spring of 1871, when the German Chancellor communicated with all the European Cabinets respecting the necessity of adopting measures to suppress the agitation organised by the *Internationale*. To encounter this coalition of destructive forces it was desired to form a coalition of Governments. Austria and Russia readily agreed to the proposal; England declined it, and the other Cabinets manifested no special anxiety to carry it out. Consequently there accrued an exchange of views amongst the three Eastern Powers, resulting in their joint admission that mere repression would not suffice, and that the evil must be dealt with more fundamentally—in other words, that an attempt should be made to remedy it by supplying the real necessities and granting the equitable demands of the working-classes. It was pointed out that the circumstances materially giving rise to the agitation prevailing amongst factory hands, were the result of a free economic development, the factors of which—increase of means of communication, improvements in machinery, &c.—could not be hampered by State interference, and that the State

must abstain from meddling with the standards of wages and prices, or with founding or managing productive associations. Recognition was accorded to the adequacy of recent legislation in connection with savings' banks, workmen's dwellings, the protection of children and youthful operatives against overwork and educational neglect, and of the working-class in general against the truck-system. The State, it was admitted, could do nothing to regulate working hours and wages, the critical question of the whole agitation; but some improvements in this direction might be effected by the Arbitration Courts, constituted by Art. 108 of the Trade Regulations. How true this was, we may infer from the general approval accorded to Herr von Itzenplitz's Decrees of Oct. 4, 1870, and July 31, 1871.

Bismarck's view of the whole question, differing essentially from the above, may be summed up as follows: "The new Socialist doctrine, as far as it depends upon the *Internationale*, will have nothing whatever to do with existing States, and absolutely repudiates on principle any Governmental assistance. It heads its programme with a demand for the transformation of the actual State into the Socialistic People's State. Governmental interference with the Socialist movement has nothing in common, therefore, with the furtherance of Socialistic aims; it would appear, on the contrary, to be the only available means of arresting the advance of that movement in a wrong direction and guiding it into salutary paths—of realising those Socialistic aspirations which are justifiable and compatible with the maintenance of public and social order. Judging by acknowledged facts, the Socialist movement here is not deeply or extensively influenced by the *Internationale*. Marx's teachings and organisation are repugnant, rather

than sympathetic, to Prussian operatives, as is demonstrated by the dissidence of the Lassalle Party with that of Bebel and Liebknecht. Not only is a practical understanding still achievable with the former, but it is still in the power of the authorities, by prompt and judicious action, to reconcile the majority of the working-men with existing institutions, and to restore unison to the relations between operatives and employers. Besides, Socialistic theories and postulates have already been so widely disseminated amongst the masses that it would be idle to ignore the dangers with which they threaten society. On the contrary, it is urgently necessary to ventilate them frequently and publicly, in order that the misguided masses may not only always hear the voices of agitators, but may listen to the for as well as to the against, and learn what is really justifiable and unjustifiable, practicable and impracticable, of their demands."

At that time the Emperor of Austria took a strong personal interest in the question, and further investigations, to be undertaken in common by Germany and Austria, were contemplated as a means of *rapprochement* between the two still estranged States; but they were not carried out. The Chancellor was busied with questions of more urgent importance, and, a little later on, the *Internationale* broke up, never having been in reality as momentous as it had pretended to be, and had been esteemed by public opinion. During the ensuing few years some endeavours were made to check the Socialistic Agitation. A paragraph in the Press Law submitted to the Reichstag in 1873, framed with this object, was rejected by a Liberal majority. The Social Democrats persevered in their anti-governmental polemics, and the Ministry, in 1875, again recommended to Parliament a supplementary enactment (*Press-*

gesetz) for their repression, which was again rejected by the Liberals. Thenceforth the Communistic Party of Revolution went unhindered on its way until, in 1878, it aroused feelings in the operative world which found expression in the attempts made upon the Emperor's life in May and June of that year.

From that moment dates the revival in Bismarck's mind of his reformatory ideas. His first duty, however, was to take strong repressive measures against the evil that had assumed such enormous proportions. To this end he brought forward a Bill, towards the end of May, 1878, which fell a victim to the resistance of the Liberal majority of the Reichstag. Dissolution of the latter followed, and the new elections returned a more sensible Assembly, which accorded its sanction to a measure for the repression of Socialistic excesses. During the debate on this Bill the Chancellor spoke as follows:

"I have already stated that I am ready to further any effort positively directed towards ameliorating the working-man's lot, such as, for instance, the establishment of an Association for enabling him to obtain a larger share of industrial profits and for reducing his hours of labour, as considerably as may be compatible with the limits imposed by competition, and the state of the manufacture markets. Associations of this class are no innovation in Germany. Five centuries ago they were as active as they are now, with varying success. But they invariably aimed at the attainment of positive results; and the notions of infringing the rights of third persons, of interfering with property, and of undermining belief in God and the Monarchy occurred to no man. Even during the terrible outrages of the Peasants' War, in which the most violent and ignorant covetousness ran riot—if you will read the treaties concluded by the peasantry with individual nobles of sufficiently evil repute,

you will find that the property of these latter was never confiscated to an unjustifiable extent. The Communist of those days did not dream of interfering with the possessions even of their enemies. . . . As soon as the Social Democrats shall put forward a practical scheme for improving the lot of the working classes, I, at least, will not refuse to consider their proposals in a benevolent and conciliatory spirit; nor will I shrink from the theory that the State should help those who help themselves. . . . But how do matters stand now? We find ourselves face to face with negation—with a resolve to pull the house down, and no suggestion on the part of anybody as to what is to replace our present roof when it shall have been torn off. We have had the advantage of sitting with Social-Democrats in this House for eleven years; can you recall any one of their lengthy orations in which was to be found the faintest shadow of a positive idea or proposition concerning the future—of the programme which those persons intend to carry out when they shall have battered down existing institutions? I know of none; but I also know why they do not tell us how they mean to arrange the world when they shall be its masters. It is because they do not know it themselves, not having discovered the philosopher's stone. They can never keep the promises with which they lead people astray. . . . I do not know if any of you have found the time to read Moore's 'Veiled Prophet,' who hid his face because, as soon as his veil was raised, he stood revealed in all his loathsome hideousness. The infuriate demagogues into whose hands a vast number of our working men, formerly so well conducted, has fallen, remind me of that Veiled Prophet of Khorassan. Their dupes have never seen Mokanna's face; should they ever catch a glimpse of it they will be appalled, for it is as the face of a corpse."

"That these men of vague promises have found support amongst people dissatisfied with their circumstances, and capable of expressing their dissatisfaction with true German energy, is not to be wondered at. If you hold out brilliant prospects to people who can read, but cannot understand what they read (and, though the ability to read is much more general with us than in France and England, the capacity for practically judging the matter read is less common than in those countries)'; if you teach them scornfully and mockingly, verbally and in print, that all they have hitherto held sacred is nothing but humbug, lies, hollow phrases and a swindle; if you take from them their belief in God and our Kingdom, their attachment to their native country, families, property, their right to transmit their earnings to their children, it is by no means difficult to bring men of restricted intelligence to such a frame of mind that they shall clench their fists and exclaim, 'Curse hope, curse faith, and above all curse patience!' What remains to men thus spiritually poor and naked, but the frantic pursuit of sensual enjoyments—the only pleasures capable of reconciling them to existence?"

"If we ask how it has come to pass that this Gospel of negation has found such favour in Germany, we must look back attentively to the time of its introduction. Up to 1870 it mattered not where the leaders of the International League resided—in London or Geneva—their real field of experiment and action was France, where they had in readiness an army capable of fighting the Commune's battles and of making itself master of the capital for a time. When they were actually the rulers of Paris, did they propound a positive programme, setting forth how they proposed to utilise their power for the benefit of the poorer classes? I know of none. They did nothing but murder, burn, outrage,

destroy national monuments—and if they had converted all Paris into one huge heap of ashes, they would have gazed at it blankly without in the least knowing what they wanted. All they could say was 'We are dissatisfied; there must be a change; but to what, we do not know.' That is where they would have stuck. Well, as soon as they had been energetically put down by the French Government, they perceived that they must quit that field of experiment, as it was watched by an angry, resolute and stern sentinel. So they looked about them in Europe to see where they should set up the tents they had been compelled to strike in France. I am not at all surprised that they determined to transfer their agitation to Germany. What could be more attractive to them than a country with such merciful laws, such good natured judges, such a strong predilection for criticism (especially in connection with its Government); a country in which an attack upon a Minister is reckoned a praiseworthy feat—in which grateful recognition of anything done by Government passes for servility—in which Socialism's bases of operations, the large towns, had been very carefully prepared by the Progressists for the adoption of Communistic principles—in which Progressist agitation had achieved extraordinary success in discrediting the authorities and State institutions? It is a fact that the International Socialists, when they invaded Germany, found respect for those institutions destroyed in this country, where the tendency to treat them with scorn—scorn over which every Philistine chuckles, though he is glad enough to be protected from its consequences—had undergone an amazing development. In a word, they recognised the country of which they could confidently say: 'Let us build our huts here!'"

"Every German is possessed by an intrinsic tendency towards discontent and by boundless ambition. The baker

who sets up shop does not merely aspire to become the wealthiest baker in his town; no, he wants to be a house-owner, a private gentleman, a banker, a millionaire. There are no limits to his ambition. This peculiarity of his has its good side; it is true German assiduity, which never places its goal too near, but which is also extremely adverse to public contentment—especially to that of all subordinate officials—and the consequence of which is that nearly all our subaltern *employés* are infected by the Socialistic plague. Well, how were the Socialists' anticipations fulfilled in Germany? The International agitation transferred itself to that Promised Land, in which it still abides. About that time we had introduced quite new arrangements in different directions, which suddenly withdrew a vast number of workmen from the small towns and agricultural districts and imported into the cities a fluctuating population, whose productive capacity was dependent upon the varying conditions of trade and industry in the great cities. Sometimes these people got plenty of work, and sometimes not; but none of them had any inclination to return to country life. The amusements of great cities are very attractive; railway communications facilitate the movements of those who yield to attractions of that nature. . . . Then we brought in the new Press Law, which abolished the caution money and the newspaper stamp. Hitherto a certain amount of capital, carrying with it possibly a certain amount of intellectual cultivation, had been requisite and forthcoming for the creation of a newspaper; nowadays such an enterprise can be undertaken with from five to seven pounds, and there is no need of education, for all that has to be done is to copy the matter supplied by the agitators; and newspapers of this class, which appear once a week and are for that reason all the more read by and circulated amongst

the operatives in small country towns—these appeals to the common man and his most dangerous instincts—this variety of agitation, in a word, was formerly not so easy. It has been materially promoted by our Press-Law and by the mercifulness of our Penal Code; moreover, the conviction that sentence of death will not be enforced, contributes in no small degree to the commission of such hideous crimes as these attempts to assassinate the Emperor. . . . Seeing, too, that the extraordinary impulse imparted to business during the years immediately succeeding the war has been followed by an utter collapse, and that many people who formerly earned a great deal of money now earn none at all; nobody can be surprised that our danger has risen to its present height, and that we now have here in Berlin between sixty and a hundred thousand men, well organised and brigaded in Associations, who openly avow their resolve to fight *against* established order and *for* the programme with which we are acquainted. Under these circumstances it is quite natural that manufacture, credit and trade should suffer in Berlin; for, to the apprehension of anyone proposing to invest his capital here, or to the troubled fancy of a wealthy proprietor, this organisation of from sixty to a hundred thousand men presents itself as a hostile army, encamped in our midst, which has only not as yet found the opportune moment to deal with the imprudent proprietor or capitalist in question, in such sort as either to deprive him altogether of his honestly earned property, or to restrict him in disposing of it, at the very least. The fear (in which I do not share) that the ideas of Schiller's Robbers have been uncompromisingly adopted by our operatives, the very backbone of the people, has deeply depressed public confidence. In order to stimulate it once more I deem it necessary that the State should shatter the power of these agitators. Now-

adays Socialistic agitation is a trade like any other; men become agitators and popular orators as they formerly became smiths or carpenters; they take to the new business and find themselves a good deal better off in it than they did in the old one. We must defend ourselves against this class of tradesman, and the sooner we take measures to do so the more likely we shall be to finish the job without seriously prejudicing the liberties of other people or our own safety and domestic peace."

The Reichstag fulfilled the Chancellor's expectations, granting (by a majority of seventy-two) extraordinary powers to the Government to suppress the excesses of Social-Democracy in an effective manner. Material concessions were made on either side, for it was quite clear to Parliament as well as to the Cabinet that the main object of the Bill was to make a clean sweep of existing abuses as a preliminary step to the introduction of State measures framed for the purpose of realising justifiable social aspirations.

The Socialist Law was enforced throughout all the States of the Empire. Firstly, the Social-Democratic clubs and newspapers were suppressed; secondly, the professional agitators were expelled the realm; then a State of Siege was proclaimed in Berlin and Leipzig, involving the restriction of the right of holding meetings, prohibition of the sale of newspapers in public thoroughfares, expulsion of persons likely to disturb public tranquillity, and certain limitations of the right to own, carry or sell arms.

In Parliament, the Liberals had thitherto remained indifferent to the interests of the working classes, whose representatives in the Progressist and National-Liberal parties professed the doctrine of the Manchester school, i.e. that *laissez aller* was the true principle of all economic transac-

tions. The strict observance of the Sabbath as a day of rest for the working man, and especially of relief to overworked youthful operatives, had been made law in spite of the energetic opposition of Progressist orators in the Diet. Nothing further in the direction of benefiting the working classes was done by the Liberals; but the Chancellor took the initiative in bringing about a reform inspired by the idea entertained by him so far back as 1871, viz. that it is the duty of the State to care for the well-being of the operative classes.

His first step in this direction was to prepare a Bill for insuring workmen against the consequences of accidents, which was submitted (April, 1881) to the Federal Council and handed over by the latter to the Reichstag for discussion. It proposed to establish an Imperial Insurance Office in which every operative employed in all sorts of mines and manufactories whose earnings should not exceed 2000 marks (£100) a year should be compelled to insure. The insurance was to cover all manner of accidents, whether caused by the fault of the employer or the workmen himself, or by pure mishap. In case of gross neglect on the part of the employer, however, he was to be answerable to the Imperial Office for all expenses accruing; whilst wilful carelessness on the part of the injured operative would render the latter liable to lose half the indemnity secured to him by his premium. (Here follow at great length the details of the Bill which, as it failed to pass, are of little practical interest, and have therefore been suppressed in the English version of "Unser Reichskanzler."—Translator's Note.)

The Chancellor's project opened up a new field of legislation; it was the first practical attempt to do away with the social question by subjecting economic life—as modified by

modern inventions, especially by the utilisation of steam-power for manufacturing and communications—to an organic transformation. Should experience have justified this experiment, it might have been followed by others, as, for instance, Imperial arrangements for workmen's Life and Old Age Insurance. The broader the gulf between Capital and the Proletariate, the more imperative became the duty of State Legislation to endeavour to bring them together. There were many reasons why the State should take the weaker of the two under its protection. It was obviously unfair to pension army invalids and to allow the invalids of labour to die in misery after a life of toil—to compel them to become paupers or mendicants. It was highly desirable that our existing poor laws should be replaced by a sensible, practical organisation; indeed, this was not only the duty of the State towards the poorer working-classes, but a measure dictated to it by the instinct of self preservation, as calculated to conciliate the most numerous class of the whole population.

At the time when the above measure was on the *tapis*, the Chancellor observed to me:—"Anybody who has before him the prospect of a pension, be it ever so small, in old age or infirmity is much happier and more content with his lot, much more tractable and easy to manage, than he whose future is absolutely uncertain. Mark the difference between a domestic servant and an office messenger or Court lackey; these last are much readier to do their work and display much more attachment to their service than the first, because they have a pension to look forward to. In France even the common man, if he can possibly put by anything, provides for his future by purchasing *Rentes*. Something of that sort ought to be established for our working folk. People talk about State Socialism, and think

they have settled the matter; as if such things were to be disposed of with a phrase! Socialism or not, it is necessary, the outcome of an urgent requirement. They say, too, the Bill would entail enormous expenditure, a hundred million of marks, at least—perhaps twice as much. As for me, three hundred millions would not alarm me. We must find some means for relieving the unindebted poor, on the part of the State and not in the form of alms. Contentment amongst the impecunious and disinherited classes would not be dearly purchased by an enormous sum. They must be made to understand that the State is of some use—that it does not only take, but gives to boot. And if the State, which does not look for interest or dividends, takes the matter in hand, the thing is easy enough. If the worst came to the worst, we might meet the expense with the Tobacco-Monopoly. You need not put that suggestion forward, it is our last trump. A more comfortable future for the poor may be assured by raising taxation upon such luxuries as tobacco, beer and spirits. The English, Americans, and Russians have no monopoly; but they derive enormous revenues from taxing luxuries heavily. As the least taxed people in Europe we can bear with a good deal in that direction; and if the result enable us to secure the future of our operatives—uncertainty respecting which is the chief cause of their hatred of the State—the money will be well invested, for by spending it thus we may avert a social revolution which may break out fifty years hence, or ten, and which, however short a time it last, will assuredly swallow up infinitely larger sums than those we now propose to expend. Some of the Liberals see the force of these proposals; of course they are bound to criticise them, in order to show that they understand the question better than we do. They don't want the man who has dealt with it to

have the credit of it, but would like to take it in hand themselves, for the sake of popularity. They will probably quash it in Committee, as they have of late years done with several useful measures. But something must be done soon, or the Socialist Law will not avail us much."

The Chancellor took occasion to deliver himself with respect to this project of reform during the debate on the Draft Bill in Parliament, when it was opposed by Deputies Bamberger and Eugene Richter.

"The field of Legislation—justly pronounced by Deputy Richter to be one commanding a vast perspective—opened up by this measure has to do with a question which, in all probability, will not vanish from the orders of the day very speedily. For the last fifty years we have been talking about the social question. Since the Socialist Law was passed I have been repeatedly reminded, in high quarters as well as low, of the promise I then gave that something positive should be done to remove the causes of Socialism. Hints of this sort have been imparted to me *toto die;* but I do not believe that our sons, or even our grandsons, will be able to finally solve the question; indeed no political questions can ever be mathematically settled, as books are balanced in business; they crop up, have their time, and give way to other questions propounded by history. Organic development wills that it shall be so. I consider it my duty to take up these questions without party-feeling or excitement, because I know not who is to do so, if not the Imperial Government. Deputy Richter has pointed out the responsibility of the State for what it is now doing. Well, gentlemen, I feel that the State should also be responsible for what it leaves undone. I am not of opinion that *laissez faire, laissez aller*, "pure Manchester policy," "everybody take care of himself," "the weakest must go the wall," "to

him who hath shall be given, from him who hath not shall be taken away," can be practised in a monarchically, patriarchically governed State. . . . The legislation we propose does not go far enough for Deputy Richter. Well; if he only have patience enough, we shall be able later on to meet his expectations and wishes; but not too quickly or all at once. Such laws are not founded upon the basis of a theoretical whim, but have a genesis, an antecedent history of their own, from which they directly emanate. The reason that we come forward to-day with a Bill for Insurance against accidents is that this method of assisting the poor and weakly had already been warmly recommended at a time when I was looking closely into the whole question. I found all manner of suggestions and schemes to hand with respect to this measure, which seemed by documentary evidence to be most urgent; and I gave my attention to it. I felt at first that, in proportion to the theory it represented, it was not nearly comprehensive enough. I was tempted to substitute the words "every German" for "every working-man" in the first paragraph, dealing with compensations for accident. But the Insurance question is surrounded by serious difficulties—for instance, when it touches the independent workman, who suffers injury when he is working on his own account—and the first thing that we had to think about—it troubled us a good deal more than the two hours' speech of a Deputy does—was: How far should this measure extend, without involving us in a blunder at the very inception of our legislative experiments? As a landowner, the question interested me keenly: can it be extended to agriculture, in which the majority of labourers in the Eastern provinces is engaged? I will not renounce my hope that this may be possible; but I must say a few words about the difficulties which arrested

us in that particular direction. It is obvious that agricultural labour—as far as it is connected with machinery and elementary forces—cannot be excluded from legislation of this kind. But the other and more general sort of agricultural labour has a great deal to do with machinery that is not worked by elementary forces, but by horses and manual toil, and thus possibly involves danger to life and limb. It is however, extraordinarily difficult to fix the percentage of the labouring population employed in that manner. Deputy Richter had his statistics all cut and dry respecting the exact percentage of each branch of human occupation, and imparted it to us with great positiveness. I should be grateful to him if he would acquaint us with the source whence he derived that valuable information. We did our best; our prefatory studies were compiled most carefully from authentic *data*, not imaginary ones based upon conjecture; and if we had lighted upon the statistics which Deputy Richter seems to have discovered with a mere glance of his more perceptive eye—if they had been accessible to us and we had found them correct—we might have gone further in our proposals than we have actually done." . . .

"For my part, I should not have the courage to proceed with this measure if the outlay it involves were to be exclusively borne by industrials; were State assistance, in every form now obtaining, to be shut off from it, I should not venture to assume the responsibility of imposing the Bill upon German industry. We may limit the State subvention to a period of three years, or otherwise, as you please; but, without having made any experiment by which we can appraise what is before us, I do not feel justified in saddling our industrials with the whole cost of these State institutions, or in burdening them more heavily than here-

tofore with the outlay for injured operatives that has hitherto been defrayed by local Poor-Relief, and will at some future time be disbursed to a greater, completer, and more dignified extent by the insured themselves in partnership with the State. There is no question here of creating new burdens, but of transferring old ones from local relief-associations to the State. I do not dispute that the burden of the giver and the advantage of the operative will both be increased by the difference between what local relief has heretofore been able to do for the injured operative and what will be done for him in the future. That difference will have to be made good by the State; the question is whether or not it is worth while, at that cost, to provide the injured operative with more efficient attendance, instead of compelling him to go to law in order to obtain his rights, and with the moderate supplementary compensation which he will be entitled to demand from the State? I say it is. The invalid workman is saved from starvation by the measure we now advocate. That however is not sufficient to make him look forward contentedly to old age; and the Bill is animated by a desire to keep alive the sense of human dignity, which I hope the poorest German will preserve, and which prescribes that he should not be forced to accept eleemosynary assistance (to which he has no right) but should be entitled to something of which nobody can dispose but himself, and of which nobody can deprive him; that doors, hitherto closed to him, should open readily when he knocks, and that better treatment should be accorded to him in his place of refuge by reason of the additional means he brings into it with him. Whosoever has looked closely into the state of the poor in large towns, or into the arrangements made for paupers in country communes, and has seen for himself how—even in

the best managed villages—a poor wretch is sometimes treated when weakly and crippled, must admit that any healthy operative, contemplating that spectacle, is fully justified in exclaiming 'It is simply horrible that a human being should be treated worse than a dog in his own house!' I say, therefore, our first object in bringing forward this Bill is to ensure kindlier treatment to this class of the poor; and next year I will do my best to give Deputy Richter full satisfaction as to the extent of the provision proposed to be made by the state for the better usage of the unemployed. For the present this measure must be regarded as an experiment—an attempt to find out the depth of the financial water into which we ask the country to plunge". . . .

"An appropriate title for our enterprise would be 'Practical Christianity,' but *sans phrase*, we do not want to feed poor people with figures of speech, but with something solid. Death costs nothing: but unless you will put your hands in your pockets and into the State Exchequer, you will not do much good. To saddle our industry with the whole affair—well, I don't know that it could bear the burden. All manufacturers are having hard times."

(The remainder of Prince Bismarck's speech, or, at least, the greater part of it, is devoted to elaborate refutations of the arguments brought forward against his Workmen's Accidental Insurance Bill by Messrs. Bamberger and Richter. It teems with administrative technicalities and local details possibly of great interest to German economists, but probably of so little to English readers that it has been here omitted.—Translator's Note.)

Although thus pleaded for by the Chancellor, his Draft-Bill suffered such changes at the hands of Parliament that,

although it was passed on June 15, 1881, the Federal Council refused to sanction it in its altered form. Its opponents were; 1. the Liberal Free-Trade *doctrinaires;* 2. the Particularists; 3. the Ultramontanists; 4. a few leading manufacturers. Free-Traders regard business as the main object of human life, to which all others must be subordinated. According to their theory trade must be carried on by individual initiative, not to be influenced, managed or restricted in any way by the commonwealth or the State. For the disciples of this creed every kind of Socialism (including State-Socialism) means the end of civilisation; and Herr Bamberger did not hesitate to designate the first day of the discussion on the Bill as the *dies nefastus* of the German Empire, destined to substitute an enslaved State for one of free development. The Free-Traders' objections are of two kinds; firstly, that Bismarck's measure was dangerous; secondly, that it was futile: i.e. dangerous because its fundamental idea was calculated to lead to complicated and hazardous experiments; futile, because its several prescriptions would prove impracticable. The error they commit is to condemn Socialism, body and boots, instead of making a distinction between true and false Socialism. The broadest interpretation of Socialism is that it augments individual property. In the case of a measure which not only recognises property but protects and develops it there can be no question of Socialism, if the above interpretation be the correct one; and if, on the other hand, any restriction of individual property by public duties, or by regulations concerning its disposal, be Socialism, why then Socialism pervades every legal enactment, and the State itself is an out-and-out Socialistic institution.

Burke says: "It is extremely difficult to define what the State should undertake to direct, and what it should leave

to individual endeavours with as little interference as possible." Wisdom and experience expressed itself thus modestly and distrustfully with respect to this ticklish subject. How confident and peremptory, on the contrary, is the opinion pronounced upon it by Free Trade sagacity! Because it is not difficult to discover, in the history of the past, instances of unwise interference with economic matters on the part of Governments, these *doctrinaires*, in their scorn of what they term a "patriarchal *régime*," have declared any and every administrative attempt to regulate such matters inadmissible. According to the Manchester Catechism it is a settled and irrefutable dogma that Government shall have as little as may be to say or do in this direction. Its business is to protect speculators, keep the peace, coin money and leave everything else to "the People." "Let us not be too much governed!" is the cry raised by English prophets of the new faith, and echoed (with variations) by German Free Traders. This phrase, could they have their way, would become the watchword of the statesmen directing the affairs of the Empire and the several States of Germany. Like the Gods of Epicurus, they should sit aloft, contemplating sub-lunar affairs, and trusting to the natural course of events to prove invariably beneficial and infallibly hit the right nail on the head. It would be easy to govern a country upon such principles; no reflection would be requisite, and there would be an end to responsibility. The doctrine *à la mode* runs thus:—"Individual interests necessarily concur with public interests, seeing that the public is only an agglomeration of individuals. Individuals always understand what suits them better than the Government does; therefore let them alone to do what they think fit. The ignorant and prejudiced masses, the weak, unthinking and inexperienced must not receive any im-

pulsion, assistance, or protection from their intelligent rulers, and any law framed with that object is a bad law. Men must not be treated like children, but like adults; they must acquire wisdom by experience."

If we consider actual facts without prejudice or excitement we shall readily recognise the hollowness of this theory, and perceive that State interference in private affairs is of unavoidable necessity to the maintenance and development of civilization in numberless respects; and that there is no general rule determining the limits of that interference. In what direction have Governments not interfered, with respect to the rights of property, necessarily and beneficially? The State concludes Treaties of Commerce and Navigation with Foreign Powers, regulates the transfer of estate, controls marriage-contracts, provides for the instruction of youth, constructs roads, railways and telegraph-lines, manages the postal service, keeps bridges and canals in good order, builds lighthouses, constructs harbours, coins money and regulates mines, enforces an uniform system of weights and measures, grants patents and guarantees authors' rights, rewarding the labour of invention by investing it with a limited time monopoly. By insisting upon the registration of every patented discovery or improvement it prevents secrets of that class from dying out with their inventors and thus being lost to the public for ever. It expropriates for the common good, regulates the trade in shares and takes measures for the protection and amelioration of public health. It looks after apothecaries, averts (by quarantine regulations) the importation of pestilences, keeps cities clean and enforces vaccination, fixes cab-tariffs, provides for the poor and insane, compels emigration agents to act fairly by emigrants, encourages higher instruction, art and science, and—although in principle it tolerates all religions

and beliefs—does not permit any form of worship prejudicial to public morality.

In exercising all these functions the State restricts individual liberty for the benefit of the general public. But it extends its protection to the ignorant and helpless classes of the population in many other ways. In Prussia it has regulated the working-hours of tenant labourers on estates and abolished vassalage. It protects children and persons of tender years, lunatics and even spendthrifts by appointing guardians to them, prohibits the truck-system, regulates the employment of women and children in industrial establishments, keeps a watchful eye on pawnbrokers, punishes usurers, and forbids the sale of adulterated and unwholesome victuals. Important contracts, to be valid, must be made in writing and, in many cases, legalised by a notary. In order to obviate error or fraud, the law prescribes the form to be observed in drawing up wills. It requires that articles in the precious metals should be marked by a State official for the protection of the purchaser, who would otherwise be unable to ascertain to a certainty their genuineness, or the contrary. It regulates legal charges and lawyers' fees, the rights of emigrants on board ship, and the seaworthiness of trading and passenger vessels. It compels practising physicians to prove that they have sufficiently studied the science of healing. Experience shows that the average intelligence of the public is inadequate to guard it against the enterprises of quackery. Our laws formerly checked charlatanism and the sale of costly specific remedies by making them punishable; but recent legislation, under the pressure of Manchester's doctrine of "unrestricted competition," has revoked those precautionary statutes, to the infinite prejudice of the credulous.

Here we have a few instances of the measures taken by

the Governments of civilised States to aid and protect the populations of their respective countries—measures ascertained to be indispensable to public security and welfare, and the abolition whereof would be a step backwards from civilisation to barbarism. But the Free-Trade *doctrinaires*, if they dared to be consistent, would endeavour to bring about the revocation of all these laws. As it is, they would like to see all those abolished which at present close the door against extravagant speculation, of which they are the champions and advocates. Were this done, the poor, weak and foolish would soon be stripped of all they possess by the rich, powerful and cunning. "And what harm would that do?" they answer; "who asked such people to be poor, weak and foolish? The State must conform to our infallible theory, which adjusts itself in practice and ultimately cannot fail to make everybody happy. Absolute Free-Trade is our watchword and sole object; we are not to be diverted from it by any sentimental flowers of rhetoric."

Compared to the above, what is Government interference with economic affairs; what is State Socialism? Simply the concentrated action of general society's wisdom and power upon a given point—a mutual class agreement that certain things must be done or left undone for the common good, and the enforcement of that convention. How has it ever been possible to assume that this latent but most energetic force can be either ineffective or injurious? Because people must be taught by experience—that is, they must be manifestly and unmistakably menaced and imperilled before they will learn. Nothing but the power of a Government is capable of keeping society together and hindering the process of dissolution which would result from "a natural state of things;" and, great as are the benefits we have hitherto derived from that power, still greater ones

still await us in the form of laws framed to content the working classes; for which laws we shall have to thank Our Chancellor.

The opposition offered to the Bill above referred to by the Particularists is easily comprehensible; for the reform it proposed to introduce would have invigorated the Empire, by teaching a numerous class of the population to recognise a benefactor in the State, on the one hand, and, on the other, by giving a new concrete expression to German Unity in the shape of the Imperial Insurance Office. The Particularists, however, did not wish the population to experience any attachment to the Empire or any confidence in its aid. It was their desire that the Empire should hang together loosely, and be invested with as few attributes and powers as might be. Of a similar character were the objections entertained to the Bill by the Ultramontanists; true, they were opposed to the theory of individual enterprise, but then they wished the work of reform to be exclusively entrusted to the hands of the Church. Finally, the manufacturing faction which took up arms against the Chancellor's project, regarded the Accidental Insurance system as the forerunner of State interference in their business, to be followed by other and more comprehensive measures.

After the rejection of his first Bill the Chancellor (May 8, 1882) brought forward another plan for insuring operatives against the consequences of accidents, having a short time previously laid before parliament a Draft Law for insuring workmen against loses incurred through illness, which measure, having undergone certain alterations, was passed by the Reichstag and is now in force. The new Accidental Insurance Bill, on the contrary, was not conclusively dealt with last year; but we may hope that it will pass the House during the coming session. With respect to the organisation

of insurance its principles differ from those of the former Bill, substituting the action of insurance associations for that of bureaucratic centralisation—a great improvement, inasmuch as such associations can ascertain the particulars of each individual case far more accurately than a Central Board can. A Board of this kind will, however, be required to hold the balance between the two parties concerned, employers and employed, as each represents interests diametrically opposed to those of the other. It is also desirable that those Deputies who may be inclined to support the Chancellor's social policy should refrain from insisting on the maintenance of private insurance offices as a fundamental principle of the Bill. What Prince Bismarck, in his above quoted speech, said about these institutions cannot be controverted. Nor, on the other hand, can it be shown that the interests at stake are of a class calling for protection at any price. "Had these companies invested capital in gigantic enterprises, the suppression of which would annihilate that capital, the question might arise whether it would be justifiable to obliterate such an amount of public property. But Insurance Companies do not require a large capital for their business. As far as they are concerned, we only have to ask: shall they be permitted to carry on a lucrative business in which it is not necessary to invest much capital? Their suppression even would inflict no positive loss upon them. Nobody has a right to count upon the perpetuation of profits, the opportunity of acquiring which is furnished by temporary legislation." (*Grenzboten*, 1883, No. 30.)

The insurance of workmen against losses through illness is the first storey of the edifice which the Chancellor proposes to erect upon the *terrain* of social policy. Insurance against the consequences of accidents is the second. That

the third—insurance against destitution in old age—will be speedily added to these two is doubtful. The chief obstacle to this measure lies in the difficulty of setting limits to it. "While inability to work is clearly indicated by the accident itself, no hard and fast line can be drawn respecting the production of that inability by age. Who is to decide whether an operative in advanced years be capable of work, or should be supported out of the Relief Fund? This obstacle will exist as long as we adhere to the notion that relief to aged operatives should be exclusively extended to such as are incapacitated from doing work by senility. It has been recently proposed that insurance of this particular class should take effect in such sort that assistance should be granted to every operative at a certain time of life, whether he be or be not capable of working. This assistance would then, in the case of those still able to work, supplement their wages, thus enabling them to live more comfortably. By this arrangement the obstacle above referred to would be removed; but the relief afforded to operatives incapacitated from work by age would be materially lessened, and it would then be a question whether the institution would adequately fulfil its real object—the diminution of social misery. Still the idea is worthy of consideration. In the case of laws that have to contend against such formidable internal difficulties it must never be forgotten that an imperfect enactment, which is practicable, is decidedly preferable to one aiming at perfection, but which is impracticable."

However, this may be, the Chancellor is full of confident hope. "The State must take the matter into its own hands" he remarked to me on the 26th of June, 1881, "not as alms-giving, but as the right that men have to be taken care of when, with the best will imaginable, they become

unfit for work. Why should the regular soldier, disabled by war, or the official, have a right to be pensioned in his old age, and not the soldier of labour? This thing will make its own way; it has a future. When I die, possibly our policy will come to grief. But State Socialism will have its day; and he who shall take it up again will assuredly be the man at the wheel."

CHAPTER VI.

BISMARCK AS AN ORATOR AND HUMORIST.

ELOQUENCE—the gift or art of expressing one's thoughts correctly, fluently and effectively—the faculty of exercising a persuasive and decisive influence upon the feelings, convictions and resolves of others—has been variously judged. D'Alembert remarks :—"The miracles often wrought by the eloquence of an individual and the effects thus produced by it upon an entire nation constitute perhaps the most brilliant testimony to the superiority of one human being to others." Such, also, is the opinion of the American philosopher Emerson, who says : "Eloquence is the appropriate organ of the highest personal energy ;" by which he probably means that no exertion of the human mind calls for a rarer combination of capacities than that of the orator in its highest developments. Although there is a good deal to be said against this view of the subject—as, for instance, no one could rank a great general or statesman upon a lower level of intellectual energy than a great orator, inasmuch as the demands made by circumstances upon the former are much more momentous than those to which the latter's powers are subjected—the value of oratory as an active power is more questionable than its importance as a gift. Probably no people has ever been stirred to more vehement emotion in connection with State affairs than

were the Athenians by the orations of Pericles; and was not the decline of Athens mainly due to the eloquence of that great speaker? Was Demosthenes, no less oratorically gifted, able to avert its fall? Mirabeau's surpassing eloquence was incapable of laying the maleficent spirits of the 1789 Revolution. In the Frankfort Paulskirche were gathered together greater numbers of talented orators than the British Parliament had produced since the days of Pitt and Burke; and what was the result? Ephemeral successes culminating in a miserable *fiasco.* George von Vincke was an able speaker and ready debater; of what use was he to the State, or even to his own party? He talked the latter down by degrees, until, from having been the most powerful fraction in the Upper House, it ended by only disposing of about a dozen votes.

Macaulay, in his "Gladstone on Church and State," asserts that active political life is scarcely compatible with intellectual profundity, and observes:—"The politician is constantly bound to speak and act without reflection and study. He may be very badly informed upon a subject, his acquaintance with which is perhaps vague and superficial; but he must speak upon it, and, if he be a man of talent, tact and determination, he will soon discover that it is possible to speak successfully, even under those circumstances. He will become aware that the effect of words written down and polished up in his quiet library is very different from that of words spoken to the ear, with due accompaniment of gesture and emphasis. He will find that he may make mistakes without risk of detection and draw sophistical conclusions unrebuked. It will become apparent to him that, in connection with complicated commercial or legal questions, he may earn enthusiastic plaudits and produce the impression of having made an

admirable speech, without having read ten pages or thought quietly for ten minutes upon the matter."

German thinkers of the first class have gone even further than this. Immanuel Kant has stigmatised eloquence as a traitor, because it secures the last word for æsthetic feeling in questions which require to be settled by common sense. Gœthe, in one of his letters from Venice (1786) declares himself "a mortal foe to wordiness." The German Chancellor, too, is no great admirer of rhetorical arts; nor is the Muse who patronises and confers them particularly well disposed towards him. Of this he is well aware.

In reply to Dr. Gneist he once said in the Lower House (February 4, 1866), "I have already pointed out that I am no orator. I cannot work upon your feelings or render facts obscure by playing with words. My speech is simple and plain."

After the debate in the Reichstag (February, 1870) on the admission of Baden to the North German Confederation, he observed to me, referring to Deputy Lasker:—"These eloquent gentlemen are like a good many ladies with small feet, who always wear shoes too small for them and stick out their feet to be looked at. When a man has the misfortune to be eloquent, he makes speeches too often and too long."

In Versailles, a year later, he said to us:—"The gift of eloquence has done a great deal of mischief in Parliamentary life. Too much time is wasted because everybody who fancies he knows anything will insist upon speaking, even if he has nothing new to say. There is too much empty loquacity, and too little is said to the point. Everything that is really to be done is settled beforehand in the fractions, and the speeches in the House are delivered for the public, in order to show what you are capable of, and still more for

the newspapers, in the hope that they may praise you. It will come to this—that eloquence will be regarded as a misdemeanour, and long speeches will be punishable by law. There is the Federal Council, now, which makes no display of eloquence and yet has done more than anybody for the cause of Germany. I remember that at first it made some experiments in that direction; but I cut them short by saying: 'Gentlemen, there is nothing to be achieved here by eloquence or persuasive speeches, because every one of you brings his convictions along with him in his pocket, that is, his instructions. Oratory is only a waste of time. Let us limit ourselves to statements of fact.' And they did so. Nobody made a long speech after that; and so we got on quickly with our business."

At an earlier date (May 12, 1869) he had alluded to the shady side of eloquence, whilst protesting against investing deliberating Assemblies with too much power, influence and importance. Upon that occasion (in the North German Parliament) he said:—"Under the influence of the magnificent speech to which we have just listened you are about to come to a decision in the excitement of the moment; whereas; if you were to read that speech at home or to listen to its controversion by a speaker as ingenious as the last, you would probably hesitate and think to yourselves. 'There is, after all, a good deal to be said on the other side.' The gift of oratory is a very dangerous one; it carries people away, like music and improvisation. There must be something of a poet in every orator capable of moving his audience. But is the poet or *improvisatore* exactly the sort of man to whom the helm of the State, which requires cool, considerate manipulation, should be confided? And yet it is he upon whose eloquence Parliamentary decisions are immediately dependent; this is the case in any receptive

Assembly. I may recall to memory the example of a celebrated statesman, now deceased—Herr von Radowitz —I never knew any speaker exercise so overwhelming an influence upon an audience as he, and those who have heard him will bear me out that his hearers were profoundly moved by certain of his speeches, as much so that they forthwith voted in accordance with them. I observed that one of my colleagues, sitting near me on one occasion, shared the emotion of the whole assembly to such an extent that he shed tears, and, when I coolly asked him 'What are you crying about?' replied indignantly by accusing me of heartlessness. On the following day, when 30,000 copies of the speech in question had been printed (it had put a stop to all discussion upon its subject) I asked that very same gentleman what I ought to have cried about, supposing I had possessed such a thing as a heart; and he answered 'I don't know how it is, but the speech does not make the same impression upon me in print.' He could not even tell me its contents, or thereabouts; but the expression of the orator's face, his voice and overwhelming personality, had completely carried my friend away."

The Chancellor told us the same story at Versailles, in connection with a characteristic he had observed in our Gallic neighbours. "With Frenchmen," he observed, "all that is required is a grand attitude, pompous language and an imposing demeanour, just as in the theatre. If a speech only sounds well and holds out some prospect, its contents are all one. Thus it was with the Potsdam house-owner who once told me that a speech of Radowitz had affected him deeply. I asked him to mention a passage that had particularly appealed to his feelings, or had struck him as exceptionally fine. He could not remember one. I afterwards looked through the speech for the emotional

passage; and lo! there was nothing moving or even exalted in it from beginning to end. What had upset him was nothing but the orator's mien and attitude which implied that what he was saying must be profound, momentous and emotional — the thoughtful look, the reflective eye, the resonant and powerful voice. It was the same with Waldeck, although he was not nearly as clever or as imposing in appearance as Radowitz. What chiefly told, in his case, was his long white beard and strength of conviction."

Addressing the Reichstag on April 29, 1881, the Chancellor said:—"I appeal to your own experience. You have all, doubtless, felt that you know a good deal more than the best speaker amongst you. Perhaps even to-day you have firmly made up your mind to tell him so; but, just as you were about to have it out with him, he fell foul of some other Deputy with such conspicuous vigour that you said to yourself, 'Perhaps I had better not tackle him to-day.' It is the same thing everywhere. The strongest wrestler, even in the field of oratory, cows the others. But the orator is not always the best judge of politics. To be a good speaker you must have the gift of improvisation. We have all of us often witnessed public entertainments—music, varied with extempore declamation—at which a subject with which the *improvisatore* was totally unacquainted was given to him, and he delivered such a brilliant oration upon it as, but for my *entourage*, would almost have succeeded in convincing me for the moment. All I mean to say is that we cannot —with open eyes, at least—confide the guidance of public affairs to masters of mere eloquence any more than to professional improvisers; still less can we trust to them as party leaders or Ministers. I only mention this in order to point out that eloquence is a gift which is now-a-days over-estimated,

and exercises greater influence than is its due. A good speaker must be somewhat of a poet, and therefore cannot adhere mathematically to the truth. He must be *piquant* and exciting—easily inflamed, that he may be inflammatory —wherefore, to my mind, a good speaker can but seldom be a safe statesman. Sensibility, not sense, must predominate in his nature; and I believe it incompatible with the physical constitution of humanity that any man should be at once a good speaker and a cool judge. Eloquence frequently and to a perilous extent outweighs discretion; but a man of cool reflection and sure, exact calculation, to whom the management of important business may be confidently entrusted, can scarcely be an accomplished orator. Whether there be any remedy against the evils of eloquence in our present state of high civilisation I know not; but it is half the battle to recognise those evils for what they are, and we should steadfastly keep in mind the well-known example of King Frederick William I., who listened to the successive pleadings of two barristers opposed to one another, remarking after each speech, "this fellow is in the right," and then fell into such a furious passion with the effects of eloquence that both orators got into serious trouble (the monarchical *régime* being what it then was) through the very excellence of their persuasive powers. I would advise you all to remember this anecdote of the old King when you hear anybody speaking with such elaborate eloquence that he can have had but little time to spare for other occupations, even though he display that absolute mastery of his subject which a man obtains who has spoken and written in newspapers upon one theme for weeks at a stretch. It is thus that he acquires certainty; he requires no prompter; a better turn of phrase occurs to him this week than he had thought of

last week. One day, during my Parliamentary youth at Erfurt, I was expressing my admiration of a speech delivered by a Heidelberg professor, when one of his friends said to me, "you should have heard him speak that speech last year; he was quite fresh at it then; it sounded quite different." Let me warn you against wasting so much time as heretofore upon exhibitions of eloquence in our Parliamentary work, which gives us enough to do as it is. I repeat that speeches are useful as means of conveying information; but they must not be allowed to govern. The elector has a right to be represented by a person who is independent of eloquence, neither stimulated nor terrorised by it."

From the Chancellor's point of view, the orator is merely a pleading advocate; to produce an effect is his sole aim, and truth is altogether indifferent to him, or, at best, but a secondary consideration. A fluent and careful speaker, he tacks ready-made half-truths to one another, which he inflates sentimentally or pathetically in his peroration. His object is to impress and move people, to work upon their feelings; he wishes to triumph, make a show and be admired, more or less like a comedian. Bismarck on the other hand, is endowed with much genuine eloquence; that at least, is the view which will be taken of his public utterances by those who are capable of distinguishing the inner from the outer form. He is certainly no orator in the ordinary sense of the word—no *virtuoso* of speech; chiefly because he has ideas of his own. His Parliamentary deliverances go straight to the point of their subject, are flavoured by the actualities of life from which they spring, and glow with vitality in their every sentence. In them we admire the profundity and prescience of their author. He is too conscientious and proud to bid for Parliamentary or

journalistic applause with seductive phrases, more or less futile and empty; too fond of the truth to play sophistry's false cards; too full of ideas to entertain and impose upon his hearers with smoothly-rolling torrents of words. He is often embarrassed by the wealth of new ideas and perspectives suggesting themselves to him, and has resort to parentheses, ellipses, awkward elaborations and restricting provisoes; to relatives lacking their antecedents, and to the omission of connecting sentences. In addition to all this he is extremely nervous; and his voice leaves much to be desired.

Roessler, in his 'Count Bismarck and the German Nation,' happily remarks: "Bismarck's speeches reveal the extraordinary genius of their author, even when he conceals his special object under a display of dialectics. But he is no orator . . . . The political truths that are plainly apparent to his eyes are far distant from the illusions entertained by the majority of his contemporaries, and are, indeed, fatal to those illusions . . . . Bismarck frequently encounters the Legislative Bodies with a class of argument which may be styled diplomatic. Its diplomatic character does not consist of reticence, or of allegations intended to mislead. Negotiations between State and State are always partly based upon international obligations and partly upon the actual position of each State. Transactions with our Liberal representatives cannot be conducted in this manner. These gentlemen start from an ideal point of view and regard as non-existent everything that is opposed thereto. . . . Another of Bismarck's Parliamentary strategical methods is to expose practical difficulties and contradictions in the reclamations of his adversaries without making known his own final decision. In consequence of this speciality of his the extraordinary opinion prevailed for a

long time that he was incapable of concealing his projects. The artifice in question has never been so successfully practised as by him. His speech upon the reception of Baden into the North German Confederation (Feb. 24, 1870) was a striking exemplification of this Bismarckian "method." Whilst the convincing truth of the arguments advanced against the proposition could not but be generally recognised, the Chancellor made it manifest that he had not spoken his last word, and was only engaged in a brilliant and lively sham-fight."

"My speech covered an important advance movement which these good people did not notice," observed the Chancellor to me on the 27th. "It was a hint that, under certain circumstances, we should neither adhere to the Austrian nor to the French view respecting the non-admission of Southern Germany or any Southern State to the Northern Confederation. I merely put out a feeler; nothing can be done in the matter, of course, until I know how my hint was taken in Vienna and Paris."

Looking through the Chancellor's speeches, old and new, it is impossible to shut one's eyes to the fact that his oratorical style is stiff, ponderous and painfully laboured. But, in contiguity with clumsy and sometimes almost shapeless sentences, one frequently comes across others of admirable construction, expressing his thoughts simply and clearly—terse, genial sayings, happily chosen images, and out-of-the-way expressions briefly summarising the question under discussion. He constantly uses foreign words and phrases, not so much because he is often called upon to speak French and sometimes English, as because those languages are more sharply defined than our own, and contain the verbal concretions of a long political existence, which is not the case with German. Thus, in one of his

speeches he said "I must beg you to leave this matter to the *appreciation* of the Government," and "The vague construction of this measure allows us a certain *latitude* of enforcement." On another occasion he used the expression "outside the *enceinte* of the Federal Council;" and again "Such complaints, pronounced in Parliament, obtain a wide *retentissement*." On June 19, 1879 he exclaimed, "I cannot deem it desirable to put the Government *en demeure*" and spoke later on (May 8, 1880,) of somebody's *for intérieur*, meaning his conscience. In a speech delivered on Feb. 4, 1881, he used the French idiom *au fur et à mesure*, instead of the German *nach Massgabe*; and a few days later quoted the motto of Béranger's 'Roi d'Yvetôt,' i.e., "*bien dormir et pas trop faire*." On another occasion, in Parliament, he said "*J'en ai fait mon deuil*." (I've made up my mind to it) and 'if he possessed *tous les trésors de l'Inde*." An expression frequently used by him "to take things tragically," takes its rise in a French idiom; and when he observed to an "interviewer":—"These doctrinaires are looking for midday at two o'clock," he was only paraphrasing the French proverb "*Ils cherchent midi à quatorze heures*."

I subjoin a few examples of Bismarck's remarkable facility in spicing his public speeches with original and drastic metaphors. Speaking in the Prussian Diet (Sept. 24, 1849) of the Liberal doctrines imported into this country from the West, he said:—"As far as France, the Fatherland of all these theories, is concerned, it might be surmised that her example is not a particularly seductive one, and that the French just now can scarcely be regarded as the happiest people in the world. I fail to perceive in France's present condition any temptation to us to clothe our healthy body in the Nessus mantle of French State-Doctrines."

Shortly afterwards (Oct. 15) he gave utterance to the following ingenious simile:—"I would venture to point out that phraseology constitutes the chief adornment of a Constitutional *régime*, thus resembling the veil drawn over the picture of Sais. Tear it down, and you will reveal to the eyes of many persons hitherto uninitiated in the profounder secrets of Constitutionalism that the idol we worship in this temple is not altogether what they expected to find behind the veil." On another occasion he observed:—"A war made by Prussia to establish the Union would remind me of the Englishman who fought and overcame a sentry in order to hang himself in the sentry-box—that being a right which he considered it his duty to vindicate on his own behalf and that of every free-born Briton." Again, in answer to Deputy Tellkampf, he remarked (Dec. 21, 1853):—"The last speaker's views of European policy remind me of those entertained by an inhabitant of the plains whilst making an Alpine tour for the first time. Seeing a peak in front of him, he fancies that nothing can be easier than to ascend it. He does not even want a guide; for there is the mountain facing him, and the upward path appears to him free from obstacles. But he has scarcely commenced his ascent when he encounters rifts and precipices, to surmount which the finest oratory will not help him much." He characterised the German Great Powers as "the glass-house which protected the Confederation from European draughts," and exclaimed to the Opposition in the Diet:—"You are like Archimedes with his circle, who did not notice that the city had been captured." . . . "I look upon a collegiate Ministry as a blunder," he observed two years later; "two hard millstones grind badly, but eight a good deal worse." . . . After the victories in Bohemia he remarked, "The game is

not won yet; we have only doubled the stakes." Again, he described Parliamentary rhetoricians as "courageous navigators upon the ocean of speech." In 1867, addressing the North German Reichstag, he said:—"If we had a Parliament sitting in the North of Germany and another in the South, the two could not be kept apart much longer than were the waters of the Red Sea after the Israelites had passed through them." His are the *dicta:* "The poor man says that the State coach is greased with his fat," and "plucking the flower of popularity." "Ministers, if they acted in accordance with Progressist fads, would have to regard the District Judge as their family physician, to be consulted in every emergency." "The Government will not stumble over legal spiders-webs in fulfilling its duty, viz., to look to the peace of the State, nor will it lower that task to the vegetable-basket level."—"King Duncan's Chamberlain, drunk with sleep, did not perceive Macbeth's dagger; but the mission of a great country's Government is to be wakeful and keep its eyes open."—"Coriolani are not rarities in Germany, but they lack Volscians; were there Volscians, they would soon unmask themselves. But all the matrons of Kassel and Germany would not be able to bring about a final reconciliation."—"We merit your thanks when we consent to pursue noxious reptiles into their very caves in order to watch their proceedings."—"We cannot hasten the ripening of fruit by holding a lamp under it; and if we meddle with unripe fruit we only hinder its development and spoil it. It seems to me that the machinery of the Confederation has worked very well and smoothly for two years, so well indeed, that you are almost weary of it. You experience a longing just to wind up the clock once in a way, in order to see whether you can make it go even better."

With respect to the proposed abolition of the Mecklenburg Constitution he said in Parliament (April 22, 1869): "A Constitution which has grown together with the circumstances of a country for a century and more cannot be stripped off like a worn out coat; it is become, so to speak, a skin which must be loosened with surgical precautions, if maladies are to be averted." On Feb. 24, 1870, addressing the Reichstag, he said:—"I think we should not do well to exclude the Grand Duchy of Baden from the national development; in a certain sense, to skim off the cream and leave the rest of the milk to go sour."—"When I first read Deputy Lasker's motion it struck me that its author must have felt something like Hotspur, as described by Shakespeare when complaining of the tiresomeness of his life just after he had slaughtered half-a-dozen Scots. Nothing was going on; a little vivacity had to be imported into the situation. Similarly here, the foundation of State communities, reforms on a grand scale, thoroughgoing legislation—all these achievements do not assuage your thirst for action. Something or other has got to be done." Complaining (Feb. 1872) of the Liberal Opposition's ill-will, he observed:—"The Government is treated like a dangerous animal, which cannot be chained up too tightly and must never be allowed any freedom of movement, because certain to make a bad use of it forthwith." With reference to the leader of the Central party he remarked:—"Dr. Windthorst participates copiously in the Debates; the oil of his words, however, is not of that sort with which wounds are healed, but of that which feeds the flames."—Referring (May 14, 1872) to Cardinal Hohenlohe, whom Pius IX. would not receive as an Envoy, the Chancellor said:—"An Envoy, after all, is only a vessel which acquires its full value when filled with a Sovereign's instructions;

but it is of course desirable that the vessel should be of good quality and agreeable to contemplate—one, like an old crystal goblet, incapable of holding poison or gall without revealing the nature of its contents." He spoke of tobacco as "one of the best and most practicable articles for taxation, so buoyant that he expected it to bear up other matters as well as itself."—Upon the subject of a proposed abolition of a certain tax he remarked:—"A Field-Marshal once hurled his *bâton* over the wall of a hostile city in order to express his conviction that he should eventually capture the place and recover possession of his *bâton*."—During the Debate (Oct. 9, 1878) upon the Repressive Bill he said:—"Speaking from an agricultural point of view, Progressism is capital manure wherewith to prepare the soil for a crop of Socialism, which thrives admirably thereupon."

Several of the Chancellor's sayings quoted above have a witty or humorous flavour, which is still more marked and effective in others containing metaphors that are apt, pregnant and, above all, funny. Some are ironical or sarcastic—others bear the stamp of true humour, which is invariably *naif*—all impress the reader as the output of a thoughtful and genial spirit. His notions are always original, sometimes coarse and rough, but never vulgar, like the jokes with which his adversaries entertain the public. Drastic as are many of his expressions and similes he invariably remains a man of distinction, who does not choose to lower himself or to commit a breach of good taste in order to please the multitude. Dealing with an oratorical deliverance of the Goliath of the Progressist Philistines, which filled twenty columns of the Parliamentary Reports, the Chancellor observed:—"I have often had the pleasure of listening to specimens of his eloquence, which have always impressed me as resembling a performance of

the 'Maid of Orleans,' the interminable triumphal procession in which at first surprises you. When it goes by for the third time, however, you exclaim, "Good God! why, these are the same people in the same dresses as before, marching across the stage again!'"—Here I may recall the figure of speech Prince Bismarck once used in the Reichstag:—"I cannot accord an influence upon the Government, greater than that exercised by the National Liberals, to a party endowed with an inborn majority, and which does not demand that the drop of Democratic oil required for the anointing of the German Emperor should swell to a gallon."—Addressing the champions of Progressism (Hænel in particular) on February 24, 1882, he said. "It is readily to be understood that the King occupies an exalted place in your estimation; so high, indeed, as to be quite up in the clouds, where nobody sees him, or, through sheer veneration, takes any notice of him. You do not hoist him up to those heights in order to get rid of him, of course, but because you entertain such profound respect for the Monarchy; so that you would finish by showing him once a year upon earth, like the Emperor of Japan, standing upon a grating and displaying nothing of himself to his subjects but the soles of his feet."

In private conversation the Chancellor does not always give his thoughts expression fluently and in well arranged, smooth sentences, especially when serious matters are in question. But he is an admirable *raconteur*. The rich humouristic vein that runs through his nature, his keen perception of the comic aspects of men and things, a certain frivolous turn, sometimes *naif* and sometimes sly, his capacity for taking a semi-ironical, semi-jovial view of circumstances, events and persons, make him the most agreeable *causeur* that ever entertained a company *inter*

pocula or by the fireside. Many of his letters are real gems of fanciful narrative and description.

I subjoin a selection of his utterances, illustrating the above characteristics, which will prove that as a humorist, Bismarck need not fear comparison with the best of his cotemporaries in that line. He has no faculty for punning, much practised by our Jewish jesters and appreciated by the masses, but in reality, a very distant connection of true humour. His humour is rather that of the people; but he is not averse to *jeux de mots*, for he takes notice of the Berlin comic papers, and frequently alludes to their jokes in conversation.

Once, when a referendary, he observed with reference to some unfair expropriation, "No money will compensate me for the conversion of my father's park into a carp-pond, or, of my deceased aunt's grave into an eel-swamp."—The position of certain Pomeranian districts being under discussion, he said:—"The principality of Cammin hangs over that of Belgard like a pair of breeches."—During one of his Parliamentary evening parties he remarked:—"Whilst I was sitting opposite the Emperor Napoleon for nearly an hour in the parlour of the weaver's cottage at Donchéry, I felt exactly like a young man at a ball who has engaged a girl for the *cotillon*, has not a word to say to her, and heartily wishes that someone would take her away."—As I was taking leave of him for some considerable time in March, 1873, he said to me:—"My health, indeed, is by no means good. Last year I was away for nearly six months, but to no purpose. I am not what I was of old—only the Ziska-drum, you know, nothing but skin and noise."—Whilst we were fishing one afternoon at Varzin the Prince, pointing to me, said to Privy Councillor Tidemann:—"Stuff in the loop of his coat-collar that is sticking out; he looks as if he

ought to be hung up by it, which he has not deserved to be."—In April 1878, when the Chancellor wished to resign office he indicated his feelings towards his projects of economic and social-political reform as follows:—"I am like a weary hunter who has been following the chase all day long without result, and who, worn out and faint with fatigue, sinks to the ground and resolves to give up sport altogether. All of a sudden the beaters light upon a couple of splendid boars; forthwith his old passion revives in his breast; he springs to his feet as fresh as ever, and hurries off to the chase anew. It is thus with me just now. Weary of business that I cannot get transacted, and worried by unproductive colleagues, I would fain have done with the whole thing and go home. But, were any of the departmental Ministers to bring me a really good scheme, I would take to my work again with renewed vigour and energy."—Speaking to me (March 1880) about the Russian attempt to conspire against us with the French Government through General Obrutscheff, he observed:—"But the French would not have it, and told us all about it, just as a virtuous woman tells her husband when anybody makes indecent proposals to her." With reference to a personage supposed to be a candidate for the Premiership of a Ministry *in nubibus*, he said:—"There are plenty of candidates for the Chancellorship, because it is such an easy post to fill! That reminds me of what happened when the Elector of Hesse sent his body surgeon to Bernburg to find what was the intellectual condition of the last reigning Duke. The Doctor found His Highness worse than he had expected, and reported on his return that the Duke had become an idiot. 'Good God! an idiot;' exclaimed the Elector, 'why then he is incapable of reigning.' 'Oh, he can reign well enough for all that!' rejoined the doctor.'' He

then reverted to the opposition offered to him on all sides during his eighteen years' tenure of office: "Sometimes they attacked me several at a time, and from all quarters. My position was like that of Gerstæcker, as depicted in a comic paper, when an anaconda, a lion, a crocodile and a bear were all making for him simultaneously, and he was exclaiming 'What a capital article for the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung!*' But, seriously speaking, I am not good enough for these people, who fancy they know every thing better than I do, and think my successor would manage things so much more cleverly. *Contenti estote,* make the best of your black bread!"

I could add to the above many striking remarks made by the Prince in the course of conversations with me, but must keep them by me, with other matters of the sort, until they shall become powerless to harm any one.

A fountain of wit and humour sparkles in many of Bismarck's letters, as well as throughout his speeches. He wrote to Manteuffel in December, 1854:—"It is not easy to keep touch with General von Reitzenstein; he sits stiffly upon his Lieutenant-General's horse, and is much exercised respecting the independence of his position." A year later he wrote to Gerlach:—"Unless we get hold of the helm of German politics forthwith, the ship will be driven into a French harbour by the breeze of Austrian intimidation and the tide of Western influence, we playing the part of a mutinous cabin-boy." Again, writing to Manteuffel upon the subject of Austria's policy, he observed:—"The Vienna Cabinet will play the part of Don Juan to all the other Cabinets, if it can secure the services of so sturdy a Leporello as Prussia; true to that *rôle,* it will always contrive to get out of scrapes at our cost, and leave us in them." In 1859 he wrote as follows to a Prussian diplomatist with relation

to a Franco-Prussian war, which at that time seemed probable:—"If we get the worst of it the Federal States will fall off from us, like withered plums in a breeze, and every German Prince in whose capital French troops shall be billeted, will save himself patriarchally upon the raft of a new Rhenish Confederation. Perhaps a coalition of the three great neutral Powers may be brought about; but our armaments are too costly to allow of our waiting for success as patiently as England and Russia; and our intermediation will scarcely square the circle by bringing to light a basis of peace equally acceptable to France and Austria."

A few years ago the Schoenhausen peasants wanted a new burying ground, and selected a spot called "die hohe Wurth." They wrote to the Prince, asking whether he would like a hereditary grave reserved for him there. He replied by thanking them handsomely for their thoughtfulness, adding that the situation, no doubt, had its advantages, but that it was too windy for him.

Bismarck's correspondence with the ladies of his family teems with droll stories and descriptions, comical comparisons and witty *tournures de phrase;* e.g. his account of the sham hunt in Schoenhausen woods which he sent to his sister:—"We sally out in the pouring rain with Ihle, Bellin and Karl, surround with every sportsmanlike precaution, silent, and observant of the way the wind blows, a fir-copse respecting which all of us, even my father, are immutably convinced that there is not a living creature inside it except a few old women gathering sticks. Then Ihle, Karl, and two dogs traverse this copse, making the most amazing and horrible noises conceivable—especially Ihle. My father stands motionless and dumb, with gun in readiness, just as if he believed some sort of game were really about to be flushed, until Ihle, standing right in front of him, shouts at

the top of his voice. 'Hoo, la, la, hey, ha, fass, hey, hey!' Then my father asks me quite unconcernedly whether I have seen anything go past us; and I answer, with a carefully assumed air of genuine astonishment, 'No, nothing at all!' Then, cursing the weather, we go on to the next covert, which Ihle is wont to speak of with finely-acted conviction as crowded with game, and resume our performance *dal segno.* And so it goes on for three or four hours, without in the least damping the sporting ardour of my father, Ihle, or Fingal."

A real cabinet picture is his ironical description (also written to his sister) of his sojourn by the seaside in the island of Nordeney.

"I have been intending for a fortnight past to write to you, but have been prevented from doing so by pressure of business and pleasure. Should you be curious to learn what the business in question may be, I fear that my limited time and note-paper will not permit me to describe it to you in full, for its order and character suffer all sorts of modifications daily, as the tide ebbs and flows. We bathe only at high water, when the breakers are at their best; a time which is an hour later every day between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. and enables me to enjoy in pleasing alternation the advantages of a windy, chilly, rainy summer morning *al fresco* with accompaniments of sand and salt water, or of a bed five feet long in the house of my host, Mousse Omne Fimmen, with all the sense of comfort which lying upon a mattress stuffed with sea-weed is wont to awaken in my breast. Similarly, the *table-d'hôte* hour oscillates between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m.; its *menu* consisting of haddocks, beans, and mutton on the odd days of the month, and of soles, pease and veal on the even days, supplemented by sugared groats with fruit-syrup in the

former and raisin-pudding in the latter case. In order that my eyes may not be jealous of my palate, a Danish lady sits next to me, whose aspect fills me with sadness and nostalgia, for she reminds me of Pfeffer at Kniephof when he was particularly emaciated. She must have a fine disposition, but Fate has been unjust to her; her voice is soft, and she begs me to partake twice of the contents of any dish that happens to be in front of her. Opposite me sits old Minister ——, one of those awful beings that appear to us in dreams, when we have the nightmare; a fat frog without legs, who at every mouthful opens his mouth to his shoulders like a portmanteau, so that I am obliged to hold on to the table through sheer fright. My other next-neighbour is a Russian officer built like a boot-jack—a long thin body and short crooked legs."

In a third letter to his sister, complaining of all sorts of country-life grievances, he says:—"There is Johann outside steadfastly whistling an infamous Schottische out of tune and I am not hard-hearted enough to tell him to leave off, because he is doubtless endeavouring to assuage the pain of his love-sorrows by music. The ideal of his dreams was recently persuaded by her parents to marry a wheelwright." On another occasion he wrote to the same person:—"Yesterday I looked on at a dance in Plathe and drank a lot of Montebello; the former gave me acidity in the stomach, the latter cramp in the calves." Again, complaining of being coerced into taking his family to the sea-side, he wrote:—"Johanna (his wife) who is just now reposing in the arms of Lieutenant Morpheus, will have told you what awaits me. The boy yelling in the major, the girl in the minor, two singing nursemaids all over wet napkins and feeding-bottles; myself in the character of an affectionate paterfamilias. I fought against it long, but, as

all the mothers and aunts were agreed that nothing would do poor little Mary any good but salt water and sea air, had I positively refused I should have been compelled to listen to reproaches for my meanness and paternal barbarity—such as 'You see how it is! If the poor child had only been allowed to get the benefit of the sea!' every time my daughter might happen to catch a cold up to her seventieth year."

Concerning a trip on the Danube between Gran and Pesth in the summer of 1852, he wrote to his wife: "Picture to yourself Odenwald and the Taunus close together, and the interval filled up with Danube-water. The shady side of the voyage was the sunny side; for it was burning hot enough to make Tokay grow upon the deck, and there was a crowd of passengers; but, only imagine, no English. They cannot have discovered Hungary yet." Writing the same evening from the Royal Castle at Ofen, he observed: "May angels watch over you! In my case a bearskinned grenadier is doing so. I see six inches of his bayonet sticking up above the windowsill, two arms' lengths off. He is standing on the terrace overlooking the Danube, and probably thinking of his Nanny."—In Amsterdam the chimney-pots struck him as resembling "men standing upon their heads and stretching out their legs wide apart," and Holland itself as "a vast meadow, always flat and always green, upon which bushes grow, cattle feed, and towns cut out of old picture-books stand." From Pskoff he wrote (1859) to his wife:—"Russia has become elastic beneath our wheels; the versts have all had young ones." "Green," he writes from Moscow, "has every right to be the Russian national colour, as it is. I slept through forty of the hundred (German) miles hither; but the remaining sixty were all shades of green. Bushy brakes dotted with

beeches cover the swamps and hills—luxuriant grass, long green meadows—such is the country, for ten, twenty, forty miles at a stretch. Moscow, viewed from the heights, resembles a pasturage; the zinc of the roofs is green, the cupolas are green, the soldiers are green, and I have no doubt that the eggs now before me were laid by green hens." Writing from Vienna (July 22, 1864) he observed:—"I was wet through and listened to music in the Volksgarten to day for two hours. The people stared at me as though I had been a new hippopotamus for the Zoological Gardens. I sought consolation in some capital beer."

His dislike of shams and humbug, conceit and mock pathos, has found expression in many satirical word-sketches of courtiers, diplomatic colleagues, generals, deputies, men of science and the like, extremely amusing, but far from flattering for the personages in question. In a letter addressed to Manteuffel from Frankfort he wrote: "With the exception of a few subordinate intrigues connected with the fortresses, the press and the Federal Exchequer, we have been living a non-political idyll here since the 21st ult."—In the autumn of 1858 Prince Hohenlohe was placed at the head of State affairs; and it was reported that the new Liberal Ministry would recall Bismarck from Frankfort and appoint him to another post. About that time he wrote to his sister:—"If they wish to get rid of me in order to oblige place-hunters, I will retire under the guns of Schoenhausen and watch how Prussia can be governed with the support of majorities of the Left, endeavouring meanwhile to do my duty in the Upper House. Variety is the soul of life, and I hope to feel myself younger by ten years when I again take up the position in the order of battle which I occupied in 1848–9. As soon as I find the *rôles* of gentlemen and diplomatist

incompatible with one another, the pleasure or trouble of spending a large salary handsomely will not weigh in the balance with me for a moment. I have as much as I want to live upon; and if God will, as heretofore, keep my wife and children well, I shall say *vogue la galère*, no matter on what waters. Thirty years hence it will be all one to me whether I now play the part of a diplomatist or of a country squire; and up to the present time the prospect of a free, fair fight, unhampered by any official restraints, has had just as great a charm for me as that of a protracted regimen of truffles, despatches and Grand Crosses. . . . My chief joy just now is the Confederation. All these gentlemen who, six months ago, demanded my recall as necessary to German Unity now tremble at the mere thought of losing me. Schleinitz acts as a dread reminder of 1848, and they are all like a flight of pigeons that have caught sight of a hawk, panic stricken by visions of Democrats, barricades and Schleinitz. . . . Rechberg falls into my arms, quivering with emotion, squeezes my hand convulsively, and ejaculates 'We shall once more be brought together.' The Frenchmen and Englishmen naturally look upon us as incendiaries, and the Russians are afraid that their Czar will be diverted from his plans of reform by our example. Of course I tell them all, 'Keep quiet, and everything will come right'; to which, I am glad to say, they answer, 'If you stay here, we shall have a guarantee; but Usedom!' If Usedom's ears do not ring with echoes from Frankfort just now, he cannot have any drums in them. Within a week—in the imagination of his eventual colleagues—he has suffered degradation from a respectable Liberal-Conservative to a flaming red, tiger-striped acolyte of Kinkel and D'Ester. The Bamberg diplomatist talks of a Continental insurance against Prussian arson, of a Triple

Alliance against us, and of a second Olmuetz 'with actual operations.' In a word, matters are beginning to become less wearisome in the political world. My children are shouting 'Pietsch is coming' in their joy over my Schoenhausen servant of that name; and it would really seem that the advent of Pietsch and the comet are not altogether devoid of significance."

We were talking one day at Ferrières (Sept. 1870) about the way the Federal Diet dealt with the Schleswig-Holstein question in the fifties; and Count Bismarck-Bohlen, who had joined us, remarked that it must have been the sort of proceeding to send one to sleep. "Yes" observed the Chancellor, "the Frankfort people slumbered with their eyes open. It was, indeed, a sleepy dull lot, until I flavoured it with my own pepper." I asked about the famous cigar incident. "Which one do you mean?" "That in which your Excellency, finding Rechberg smoking, lit up a cigar too." "You mean Thun. Yes, that was a simple matter enough. He asked me to wait a minute. I did wait some time; when I began to feel bored, however, as he did not offer me a cigar, I took one out of my pocket and asked him for a light, which he gave me with astonishment depicted upon his countenance. But there is another story of the same sort. At the sittings of the military committee, when Rochow represented Prussia at the Federal Diet, Austria alone smoked. Rochow, who was an inveterate smoker, would have gladly done the same, but did not dare to. When I arrived, seeing no reason to the contrary, I asked the presiding Power to oblige me with a light. This request was apparently regarded by the chairman and the other gentlemen with amazement and displeasure. Obviously it was an event. As matters then stood, only Austria and Prussia smoked.

But the others considered it a question of such importance that they reported upon it to their respective Governments. Somebody must have written to Berlin about it, too; for an enquiry reached me from His late Majesty, who was not a smoker, and probably did not find the occurrence to his taste. The incident called for serious consideration at the smaller Courts, and six months elapsed, during which only the two Great Powers smoked. Then Schrenkh, the Bavarian, began to vindicate the dignity of his position by smoking. Nostitz, the Saxon, had doubtless a great mind to do as much, but had not received permission from his Minister. When, however, at the next sitting he saw the Hanoverian, Bothmer, light up, he must have come to some arrangement with Rechberg (Nostitz was under Austrian influence, having two sons in the Imperial army), for he took a cigar out of his case and puffed away vigorously. The only ones left were the Wuertemberger and the Darmstaedter, neither of whom smoked. But the honour and importance of their States imperatively required that they *should* smoke, and so next time the Wuertemberger (von Reinhard) also produced a weed—I think I see it now, a long, thin, pale yellow thing, the colour of rye straw—and smoked it with sullen determination half through, as a burnt sacrifice for his Suabian Fatherland. The only one who altogether refrained from tobacco was the representative of Hesse-Darmstadt."

One evening during tea at Versailles Count Hatzfeldt was telling us about a not over amusing *soirée* he had attended at the King's palace. "The Russian Councillor of State Grimm," he remarked, "told us all sorts of uninteresting stories about Louis XIV. and Louis XV., and the Grand Duke asked us questions that nobody could answer." "Radowitz was a good hand at answering ques-

tions of that sort," interrupted the Chancellor. "He unhesitatingly supplied you with exact information about everything imaginable, and thus achieved the greater number of his successes at Court. He told the late King once, right off the real and with the greatest assurance, how many men and horses, to a head, the Austrians had posted against us in Northern Bohemia, and he was always able to say exactly what the Maintenon or the Pompadour had worn on such a day a hundred or a hundred and fifty years ago. She had on such or such a necklace, her hair was adorned with birds of Paradise or grapes, she had on a pearl-gray or parrot-green gown with falbalas or lace—just as if he had been on the spot and seen it. The Court ladies were all ears and quite charmed with the dissertations upon toilettes which flowed from him so freely." Later on (May, 1883) the Chancellor spoke of Radowitz to me, in connection with Frederick William IV., as the "wardrobe-keeper of the King's whims."

The conversation then turned upon Alexander von Humboldt, also a courtier, but not of an amusing sort. Bismarck said :—"At the late King's evening-parties I was the only victim when Humboldt undertook to amuse the company after his fashion. He used to read aloud, often for hours at a stretch, from the biography of some French scientist or architect, in which no living soul but himself took the least interest. Whilst reading he stood upright, and held his book close to the lamp, lowering the volume from time to time, in order to make a learned comment upon its contents. Nobody listened to him, but he went on all the same. The Queen sewed away steadily at her embroidery, not hearing a word of his lecture. The King looked at pictures—copperplates and wood-engravings—and made as much noise as he could in turning over the leaves. The

young people on either side of the room and in the background chatted away to one another quite unrestrainedly, giggling, and altogether rendering the reading utterly inaudible. But it went on all the same, incessantly, murmuringly, like a brook. Gerlach sat upon his little round stool, over the edges of which his fat hung in flaps all round it, and slept, snoring with such vehemence that the King upon one occasion awakened him, saying:—'Gerlach, don't snore!' I was Humboldt's only patient listener; that is to say, I held my tongue as though I were attending to his lecture, and occupied myself with my own private thoughts until the time came for cold cakes and white wine. The old gentleman used to be horribly annoyed when he could not have all the talking to himself. I remember that once there was somebody at the King's who took up the conversation, and quite naturally—for he could talk in an agreeable manner about things that interested every one present. Humboldt was beside himself. Growling, he filled his plate with a pile of goose-liver pie, fat eels, lobster-tails and other indigestible substances—a real mountain! It was quite astounding what the old man could put away. When he could positively eat no more, he could no longer keep quiet, and so made an attempt to get the conversation into his own hands. 'Upon the peak of Popocatepetl,' he began—but it was no use; the narrator would not be cut short in his story. 'Upon the peak of Popocatepetl, seven thousand yards above' . . he resumed, after coughing and raking up his throat to attract attention; but again he failed to get his oar in, and the narrator calmly went on. 'Upon the peak of Popocatepetl, seven thousand yards above the level of the Pacific Ocean.' . . . he exclaimed in a loud agitated voice, shaken by grief and indignation; but all to no purpose, the other man talked away as steadily as

before, and the company listened to him and to him only. Such a thing had never been heard of! Humboldt sat down in a fury and plunged into profound meditations upon the ingratitude of courtiers. The Liberals made a great deal of him and reckoned him as one of themselves; but he was a man to whom the favour of Princes was absolutely indispensable, and who only felt comfortable when basking in Court sunshine. But that did not prevent him from discussing the Court with Varnhagen and telling all sorts of unsavoury stories about it. . . . Nevertheless he could talk amusingly enough when you were alone with him, about the times of Frederick William III., and more especially about his own first sojourn in Paris; and as he liked me, because I always listened to him attentively, I got a good many capital anecdotes out of him. It was the same with old Metternich. I staid once with him for a couple of days at Johannisberg. Later on, Thun said to me, 'I don't know what you have done to the old Prince; he looks upon you as a precious vessel, and says, if you don't get on, he doesn't know who will.' 'I can tell you why' I replied; 'I listened quietly to all his stories, now and then just pulling the bell to make it ring again. That is what pleases garrulous old people.'"

Upon another occasion the Chancellor gave us a very funny account of his first meeting with Heinrich von Gagern; a shining light amongst the Liberals of past days. "It was in 1850 or 1851 that Manteuffel had been directed to try to bring about an understanding between Gagern's lot and the Prussian Conservatives—at least to the extent to which the King intended to go in the German cause. Manteuffel selected Gagern and myself for the purpose, and invited us one evening to sup with him *à trois*. At first politics were but little discussed, but presently Manteuffel

invented some pretext for leaving us together. As soon as he was gone I began to talk politics, and very soberly and practically explained my standpoint to Gagern; you should have heard him! He assumed the mien of Jove, raised his eyebrows, ran his fingers through his hair, rolled his eyes and turned them up skywards till they all but cracked, and addressed me in high-flown phrases as if I had been a public meeting. That did him no good, naturally, as far as I was concerned. I answered him coolly, and we remained strangers to one another, as before. When Manteuffel came back and Jupiter had taken his leave, the former asked me—"Well, what did you arrange together?" "Nothing whatever," I replied. "That is a stupid fellow. He took me for a popular assembly. He is a mere watering-pot of phrases. There is nothing to be done with him."

Referring to his interview with Favre at Haute Maison, the Chancellor remarked:—"When I mentioned something about Strassburg and Metz he made a grimace, as though I had been cutting a joke. I might have told him what the great furrier in Berlin once said to me. One day I went to his shop to look out for a new fur-coat, and he asked me a long price for the one which best pleased me. 'You are surely joking, my dear sir?' I observed. 'No,' he replied '*never in business!*' Favre repeatedly told me that France was the land of freedom, and that Frenchmen had always been endowed with the most liberal institutions, whilst despotism reigned over Germany. It is really uncommonly funny to hear Frenchmen talk in this way—especially Favre, who always belonged to the Opposition. That, however, is how they all are. You can administer five-and-twenty lashes to any Frenchman, if you will only make him a fine speech all about the freedom and dignity

expressed in those same lashes, making such gestures as may be appropriate to your oration; he will forthwith persuade himself that he is not being flogged at all."

In February, 1871, when Paris was thrown open again, the Chancellor told us one evening that he had met a number of people with furniture and bedding that afternoon between Versailles and St. Cloud, probably villagers who had thitherto been shut up in the besieged city. "The women looked amiable enough," he continued; "but the men, as soon as they caught sight of our Prussian uniforms, assumed a gloomy expression and heroic bearing. It reminded me of the *ci-devant* Neapolitan army, in which one of the words of command was 'Faccia feroce!'—make a ferocious face!" How little such grimacing meant Bismarck experienced during the partial occupation of Paris by our troops. "I could not," he said, "resist the temptation of riding a little way into town. The people at the gates must have recognised me, for they glared at me savagely and threateningly, particularly the men. But I knew all about them; so I rode up to one, who looked especially truculent, pulled out a cigar, and asked him civilly for a light. Forthwith he handed me his short clay pipe with the politest of bows."

During the Franco-German war Bismarck gave us a word-sketch of Waldeck, formerly the leader and idol of the Progressist Democrats. "In character he resembled Favre; always consistent and true to his principles; ready beforehand with his views and resolves; a fine figure, a white venerable beard, a chest note of conviction, even about trifles, all very imposing. He would make a speech about a teaspoon with such profound solemnity and confidence that the spoon could not do less than stand upright in the cup; and would proclaim that anybody who did not believe

in that fact was a villain; so all his admirers punctually believed in it, and sang the praises of his energetic nature in every imaginable key."

Speaking of the ex-Minister, Arnim Boitzenburg, his former chief at Aachen, he observed:—"He was an amiable, clever person, but not inclined to steady business or energetic action. He resembled an india-rubber ball, which hops and hops and hops, but more feebly every time, and at last comes to a full stop. At first he would have an opinion; then he weakened it by self-contradiction; then, again, an objection to the contradiction occurred to him; until at last naught remained, and nothing was done in the matter on hand." Delbrueck was praising the notorious Count Harry Arnim as well informed and witty, but added that he was "unsympathetic and indolent." "Yes," remarked the Chancellor, "he has no propelling force in his rear." During the historical summer night (1866) when General Manteuffel was about to cross the Elbe and enter the Guelphic Kingdom, Bismarck telegraphed to him; "Treat them as fellow country-men; homicidally, if necessary." When Vogel von Falkenstein, during the Franco-German War, had Deputy Jacoby arrested as a French sympathiser, and Bismarck had in vain interceded for his liberation, the Chancellor observed—"If Vogel had eaten him up, like a rhinoceros cutlet, I should have had no objection; but what was the use of shutting up an old dried-up Jew in prison?"

In his youth Bismarck was much addicted to practical joking. When an auscultator attached to the Berlin Urban Court he was engaged one morning in taking down the deposition of a genuine Berliner, whose audacity and impertinence so irritated him that, all of a sudden, he sprang to his feet and exclaimed, "Sir, take care what you say, or I'll

throw you out of the room!" The Urban Court Councillor who was present tapped his fiery young colleague on the shoulder, saying mildly, "I beg your pardon, but the throwing out is my affair." The deposition was then resumed. It had not gone on long before Bismarck, again provoked by the deponent's insolent answers, jumped up again and thundered out, "Sir, be careful what you are about, or I'll get the Urban Court Councillor to throw you out of the room!"

About that time he gave a practical lesson in the duties of punctuality to a dilatory boot-maker in the Kronenstrasse. Crispin had already disappointed him several times when, early one morning, a messenger appeared at the shop, rang the bell, and asked, "Are Herr von Bismarck's boots ready?" The bootmaker replied in the negative, and the messenger departed. Ten minutes later another appeared with the same enquiry; and so they went on, all day long, ringing and asking, until at night-fall the boots, finished and brilliantly polished, were conveyed to Bismarck's lodging.

Bismarck played many practical jokes some forty odd years ago when he had turned his back upon the State-service and was farming at Kniephof. His guests now and then underwent strange and startling surprises. One day, whilst he was chatting to his fair cousins, the door of the drawing-room suddenly opened and four young foxes rushed in, jumping upon the sofas and chairs and tearing their coverings to tatters. Male visitors had need of steady nerves; for it not infrequently happened that when they had fallen asleep, soothed by a comfortable nightcap lined with porter and champagne, they were suddenly aroused from their slumbers by pistol shots, and the bullets, striking the ceiling above their heads, brought down showers of plaster upon them.

A lively specimen of his peculiar humour at that period was related to me by the Chancellor himself. Once he had a young lieutenant of hussars staying with him at Kniephof, who was called upon to pay a visit to a worthy old uncle in the neighbourhood—a venerable gentleman extremely tenacious with respect to etiquette and elegant manners, who had invited a party of relatives and friends of his own kidney to a grand birthday feast. On the eve of this occasion Bismarck persuaded the youthful warrior to drink a great deal more than was good for him; and next morning conveyed him in a springless cart to his uncle's castle. The roads were not good at any time; but heavy rains had transformed them into mud lakes, so that the two gentlemen arrived desperately besplashed. The lieutenant's moral and physical condition was a dismal one, for the consequences of his debauch overnight had been seriously aggravated by the shaking and jolting of the cart, and expressed themselves in somewhat alarming symptoms. The company that greeted them on their arrival, consisting of about forty persons—the ladies *en grande toilette*, the gentlemen in tail coats and white ties—contemplated them with mingled amazement and horror. The hussar soon became invisible; but Junker Otto, despite the loathing with which the highly proper, stiff and respectable people regarded him, sat down to dinner with them as coolly and cheerfully as though nothing out of the way had taken place. Everybody said how astonishing, how extremely astonishing it was that he had no notion, not the shadow of a notion, what an unpleasant person he was.

I relate the following anecdote, although I doubt its authenticity, as an illustration of the view taken by the people round Kniephof of "Junker Otto's" fancies and freaks. One day, so says the story, he went out snipe-

shooting with a friend. They had to traverse a verdant morass, into which Bismarck's companion, a short, stout, ponderous gentleman, suddenly sank up to his armpits. After struggling for some time to extricate himself and reach firm ground, he called aloud for help; and, seeing his friend picking his way slowly towards him, looking about all the while to see whether a stray snipe would get up, he fervently implored him to let the confounded snipe alone and drag him out of the vile bog-hole, the muck of which was fast rising to his mouth and nose. "My beloved friend," answered Bismarck with the utmost calm, "you will certainly never be able to scramble out of that hole; and it is quite impossible to save you. It would pain me extremely to watch your futile struggles, or to see you slowly stifle in that disgusting filth. I'll tell you what, my boy; I'll spare you a protracted death-agony through suffocation by lodging a charge of shot in your head. Thus shall you die with promptitude and dignity." "Are you beside yourself?" shouted the other, making frantic efforts to wriggle out of the swamp; "I don't want either to suffocate or to be shot; so help me out, in the name of three devils!" Raising his gun to his shoulder and taking careful aim, Bismarck replied in mournful accents, "Keep still for one second. It will soon be over. Farewell, dear friend; I will tell your poor wife all about your last moments." Stimulated to superhuman exertions by the danger threatening him so imminently, the unlucky sportsman contrived somehow to wrench himself out of the mud, and crawled on all-fours to *terra firma*. As soon as he felt himself safe he burst out into a torrent of vehement reproaches. Bismarck, smiling, listened to him a while; then, simply remarking, "You see I was right; every one for himself," turned his back upon his infuriated

companion, and strolled off leisurely to look for more snipe.

After he had resumed his official career, and was serving as referendary to the Potsdam Government, one day his chief, ignoring his presence in the office, walked to the window and began to drum with his fingers upon one of the panes. Forthwith Bismarck betook himself to the window also, and performed the "Old Dessauer's March" on another pane for the special entertainment of His Excellency the President of the Government. This was the amiable official who one day made his referendary wait in the ante-chamber for an hour, and then, calling him in, asked him roughly, "What do you want?" Bismarck replied, "I came to ask for a few days' leave; now I beg to notify my resignation."

Regarded from a certain stand-point there was a great deal of practical humour in the way he misled Benedetti and Napoleon III. in 1866 with respect to his willingness to fall in with French projects of aggrandisement, induced the Ambassador to shew his hand, and, when the opportune moment arrived, brought his Comedy of Errors to a close by publishing the document recording Napoleon's secret plans, of which he had obtained possession by dexterous manœuvring. He began by bamboozling Bonaparte into believing that he was not "un homme sérieux;" then he amused himself for several years with Napoleonic delusions; finally, he duped him and caused him to make a fool of himself. All this constituted the comic *lever de rideau* preceding the great war-tragedy.

In Ferrières the King had prohibited shooting in the park behind Rothschild's *château*, which contained several thousand pheasants. Unaware of this, I asked the Chancellor one evening why he did not sally forth, once in a

way, and shoot a few of these toothsome birds for our table. "Why not, indeed?" he replied with a smile. "True, shooting is strictly prohibited; but what can they do to me if I turn out and knock over a brace or two? I can't be taken up, for there is no one to do it." An entry in my diary upon Sept. 28, says: "To-day the King drove out to visit the cantonments before Paris. At midday I had a communication to make to the Prime Minister; but in the ante-room they told me he was not at home. 'Ridden out, I suppose?' 'No; the gentlemen have gone out to shoot a few pheasants. Engel (the Chancellor's *chasseur*) was told to follow them!' 'Have they taken their guns with them?' 'No; Podbielski sent them on ahead!'" At 2 p.m. the chief was back. He, Moltke and Podbielski had been shooting pheasants in the coverts adjoining the park, so as not to sin against His Majesty's commands. A strain of *naif* humour ran through the whole incident.

Another example of Bismarck's practical humour was afforded by the method he adopted of enlightening the major-domo of Ferrières with respect to the virtue of hospitality. Baron Rothschild, the hundred-fold millionaire —who, moreover, had been Prussian Consul-General in Paris up to the outbreak of the war—had instructed his major-domo to refuse us the wine we needed, which would have been paid for like other provisions supplied to us. Summoned before the Chancellor, this audacious fellow persisted in his refusal. First of all he denied that there was a drop of wine in the house; then he admitted that he had "a couple of hundred bottles of thin claret in the cellar" (there were seventeen thousand), and finally declared that he would not let us have any of it. The Chancellor began by pointing out to him how rudely and shabbily his

master acknowledged the honour conferred him by the King's condescension in using his house; then, as the stubborn major-domo seemed about to become insolent, he asked him curtly whether he knew what a straw-halter was. The man seemed to guess at his meaning, for he turned as white as chalk. He was then informed that a straw-halter was a thing with which stiff-necked and impertinent major-domos were bound in such sort that, when laid upon the ground, their faces were not uppermost—he might imagine the rest. Next day we had all we wanted, nor had we subsequently any reason to complain; on the contrary, a daily improvement became manifest in the behaviour of the previously recalcitrant major-domo. He even supplied our table with champagne. Practical humour had effected his complete conversion.

"Oh, Keudell," exclaimed the Chancellor suddenly, one day at Versailles, "it just occurs to me that I must get some plenary powers from the King—in German, of course. The German Emperor must write nothing but German; his Minister may be guided by circumstances. Official intercourse with diplomatists must be carried on in the language of the country, not in a foreign tongue. Bernstorff was the first who tried to bring this about at home. He wrote in German to all the Foreign Representatives in Berlin; and they all answered him in their respective mother tongues—Russian, Spanish, Swedish and I know not what besides, so that he was obliged to have a whole swarm of translators at the Ministry. That was how I found matters when I took office. Soon afterwards Budberg sent me a note in Russian. I could not stand that. If the Russians wanted to take their revenge upon us they should have made Gortchakoff write in Russian to our Envoy at Petersburg. That would have been all right. But, to

answer my German letter in Russian at Berlin was not fair. So I settled that whatever should reach us written in any language but German, French, English or Italian, should be relegated to a cupboard. Budberg, however, went on writing reminder after reminder, always in Russian. At last he called upon me in person, and asked why I did not answer him. 'Answer?' I ejaculated, with an amazed look; 'answer what? I have not seen any communication from you.' 'Why, a month ago, I wrote so and so to you, and have reminded you of it several times since.' 'Oh, of course, now I remember,' I rejoined; 'there is a whole bundle of papers in Russian character lying down-stairs; your letters will be amongst them. But not a soul here understands Russian; and everything that reaches us in an incomprehensible idiom is put away.'"

One anecdote more, relating to a mysterious arrangement in the building added to Varzin Castle. The Chancellor had just been showing me his new study, and we passed into his adjoining bed-room, just opposite which a few steps lead down into a bath-room on the right hand in the dimly lighted corridor. Close to the bath-room door is another, hidden in the wall, and opening upon a dark winding staircase. "The castle dungeon?" I enquired. "My sally-port," replied the Prince. "By these stairs I steal off quietly and unobserved, and get safe into the park by an underground passage when undesirable visitors come in sight. In the park I have a nook of refuge, where my people let me know when the coast is clear. We call the arrangement Senfft-Pilsach, because his garrulity is so wearisome." How far the secret passage went on subterraneously, or where it returned to the upper air, I never learnt; and if I knew I would not tell, for to do so would be to frustrate its purpose. Let my partial revelation serve as a warning to those who

may still feel themselves alluded to by the Chancellor's term "undesirable." It no longer applies to Herr von Senfft-Pilsach, who has departed this life, and is now probably a peculiarly hallowed member of the Old-Conservative party in the heavenly Parliament, whom "indiscreet books" can no longer vex or annoy.

CHAPTER VII.

PRINCE BISMARCK IN PRIVATE LIFE.

It is a pleasing trait in the character of modern mankind, and especially of the Germans, that they desire to make acquaintance with that portion of their great cotemporaries' lives which is averted from publicity—to know what sort of husbands and fathers they are, what is their attitude towards literature, art and science, what are their special talents and inclinations, and how they are off with respect to pecuniary circumstances. This desire smacks of inquisitiveness, but of an amiable sort, being generally combined with the wish to be assured that a genius, successful in great matters, may be happy in small ones within the four walls of his own home. It is not easy to gratify this desire of the public so long as the person lives who has to be described and characterised; for nobody likes to be analysed and "copied from nature." Even tact and discretion do not insure us against disapprobation and reproach when we undertake to follow a genius or hero into the privacy of every-day life, and to deliver him up to publicity, so to speak, in his shirt or dressing gown. However carefully we may refrain from touching more than casually upon matters bearing the character of secrecy, our achievements have always something in common with the action of peeping through a key-hole; and even praise is not invariably welcome to its objects. Nevertheless, the characteristics and circumstances recorded

in this chapter are indispensable to the completion of our sketch of the German Chancellor; many of our readers, especially the ladies, would be justified in complaining, did we entirely suppress them; finally, Bismarck himself and his near relatives have supplied the material from which our last chapter has, with a tolerably clear conscience, been compiled.

Luther, surrounded by "Kaethen" and a crowd of children, listening to music or performing jovial Christmas-tree rites, is every whit as interesting a picture as that in which he figures burning the Pope's Bull of Excommunication, or defending his cause before the Emperor and Princes of the Realm. We are glad to make acquaintance with those whom Schiller loved as a husband and father. We study with absorbing interest Goethe's connections with the women who scattered roses on his path of life. How deep is the sympathy felt for blind Milton and his daughters, even out of England! Stories told about our grey-beard Emperor in his grand-paternal capacity are always eagerly and gratefully listened to. We find something wanting in Frederick the Great, who lived more than half his life childless and friendless; and it strikes us as unnatural, uncomfortable and almost terrible that a surpassing genius should be forlorn of those relations. He seems to us grand, but dry, one-sided, incomplete, distant and cold.

It therefore rejoices us heartily to learn that the mighty statesman who has politically reconstructed our nation, took to him betimes a wife who has made him happy and has adorned his home-life with many graces and charms. Born in 1824 (therefore nine years younger than her husband) and married to him in 1847, Frau von Bismarck was the daughter of the Nether-Pomeranian landowner Heinrich von Puttkamer, who died in 1872 at a good old

age. Her betrothal to Bismarck was at first opposed by her parents—especially by her mother—as his irregularity of habits did not seem to promise well for the future of a daughter of a pious house. "All right," wrote the wooer to his sister, Malvina von Arnim, when he at last obtained the consent of Herr and Frau von Puttkamer; and he and his wife may well have reiterated those words when, whilst celebrating their Silver Wedding at Varzin (July 28, 1872), they looked back into their conjugal past. The Princess was brought up in the fear of God, but is of a quick, lively disposition, endowed with a good share of mother-wit, sensibility and good taste. Fond of music and an excellent pianist, she is also a careful and judicious housewife, and skilled in the use of drugs, after the manner of noble dames in the olden days. She has made her husband's home comfortable and intelligently shared his cares and hopes—even to a certain extent, those connected with politics, although she is not one of those ladies who busy themselves with affairs of State. Judging by his letters to her, the intercourse between them when business compelled him to leave her for a time has always been of a lively and affectionate character. In his correspondence he addresses her as "my heart" and "my beloved heart;" he sends her jessamine from Peterhof, heather-bells from Bordeaux and edelweiss from Gastein; on the sixteenth anniversary of their wedding-day he reminds her that she "brought sunshine into his bachelor-life." From Ofen he wrote to her "Good night from afar. Where did I hear the song that has been haunting me all day long—'Over the dark blue mountain, Over the white sea foam, Come, thou beloved one, Come, to thy lonely home'?" In his letters to his wife and sister we frequently encounter the expression of his longing for his family and quiet home:—"I really yearn for the country,

the woods and idleness, supplemented by loving wives and well-behaved, clean children. Whenever I hear one of these hopeful beings squalling in the street, my heart is filled with paternal feelings and educational axioms. How do our successors get on together; and are mine pretty orderly?" In another letter to his sister written from Zarskoe Selo (1860) he observed:—"After knocking about ever since the commencement of 1859, the sensation of living with my own people again, anyhow and anywhere, is so comforting that I can hardly tear myself away from the house." To his wife he wrote from Biarritz:—"My conscience smites me for seeing so much that is beautiful without you. If you could be suddenly carried hither through the air, I would straightway take you off to San Sebastian." Writing from Nuernberg he said:—"I should have liked to go from Vienna to Salzburg, where the King is—our wedding-tour over again." In a note from Babelsberg (1863) he assured his wife that he should be delighted "soon again to see her assuming command of the empty apartments at Berlin. Meanwhile I hope you will get over the hammering and rummaging which inevitably results from your return home, and that when I return I shall find everything in its place." From the pavilion of Stanislaus Augustus near Warsaw, he wrote:—"The wind blows recklessly over the Vistula, and works such havoc in the chestnut and lime trees surrounding me that their yellow leaves hurtle against the panes; but sitting here with double windows, tea, and thoughts of you and the children, I can smoke my cigar quite comfortably." On another occasion, whilst shooting in the wilds of Smaland, he expressed the wish for "a castle, peopled by my dear ones, hard by one of the quiet lakes, surrounded with coverts and heather, of this Swedish landscape."

Many other passages in his letters denote how dear his

wife is to him and how often he thinks of her and his children. They also indicate that the pious lady he espoused has brought herself in time to share his energetic way of thinking and feeling. Two days after the fall of Sedan the Chancellor read aloud to us an extract from one of her letters praying, in Scriptural language, that the French might be destroyed. "May I ask how the Countess is?" enquired Prince Albrecht (Oct. 29, 1870) whilst dining with the Chancellor at Versailles. "Oh," replied the latter, "she is all right, now that her son is getting better; but she is still suffering from her grim hatred of the Gauls, whom she would like to see shot and bayoneted, every man Jack of them, even the tiny children, who really cannot help having been born of such abominable parents." A few days later he imparted to us a remark made by her conceived in a not much milder spirit than the above—"I fear that you will not find any Bibles in France, and therefore shall send you the Psalm-book, so that you may read the prophecy against the French: 'I say to you the godless shall be exterminated.'"

The Prince has three children; a daughter, Countess Marie, born in 1848 and married about five years ago to Count Rantzau, and two unmarried sons, Counts Herbert and Wilhelm, younger than their sister. The former is in diplomacy, and has been attached to several Legations and Embassies. He is now at the Embassy in Petersburg. The latter, physically very like his father, adopted the legal career, and has been in Parliament. Both fought in the last war as privates in the Dragoons; the Chancellor looked after them carefully and rode out with them whenever circumstances permitted. In the cavalry charge at Mars la Tour Count Herbert was rather severely wounded. Both the Chancellor's sons are frequently employed in their father's

office, as well as their brother-in-law. Whilst Bismarck was Prussian Envoy at Petersburg he assiduously superintended his children's education. Every Saturday they came to him with their school-books, and had to give an account of all they had learnt during the last week. He then examined them, exhibiting a minute scholastic knowledge from which their tutors derived many valuable hints as to the proper method of teaching. After 1871 the Prince especially occupied himself with completing the instruction of his second son, whom he urged to study the Polish language—a course, by the way, which he also once recommended to the Crown Prince at Versailles. I cannot say whether or not Count Wilhelm has followed his father's advice earnestly, steadily, and perseveringly.

It may also be mentioned that Bismarck rejoices in the possession of three grandsons, Otto, Christian and Heinrich; sturdy little fellows who occasionally visit him in his palace in the Wilhelmstrasse, the eldest boy always wearing the foraging-cap of the Yellow Cuirassiers, his grandfather's regiment. The Prince himself is a striking example of the atavism displayed in many families. Formerly—in personal appearance and love of field-sports—he strongly resembled his great-grandfather, Colonel August Friedrich von Bismarck, who was killed in battle under Frederick the Great, during the Silesian war. Intellectually, he takes after his mother, a highly intelligent woman of frigid disposition; his sensibility and warmth of heart he obviously got from his father.

His relations to his two sisters, as well as to his own immediate family, are of a very affectionate character. That he is a tender and attached brother appears from his letters to his sister Malvina, whom he sometimes addresses as "my angel," "my adored one," and "my much-beloved

one," and sometimes as "dear little girl" and "dearest Creusa." "He treated her as if she had been engaged to him," say the old folks at Schoenhausen.

In his younger years Bismarck was also very susceptible of friendship. Amongst his schoolmates were Oscar von Arnim (who became his brother-in-law in 1844), Hans von Dewitz and Moritz von Blankenburg, the former leader of the Conservatives in the Prussian Lower House, to whom he was deeply attached, but with whom he unfortunately quarrelled a few years ago about the miserable Diest-Daber difficulty. During his stay at the University he became intimate with Count Kaiserlingk from Courland, and with the American John Lothrop Motley, the celebrated author, formerly U.S. Minister at Vienna. Councillor Dietze of Barby, one of our richest and most intelligent agriculturists, ranks amongst his friends of twenty years' standing. During the French campaign he said of this gentleman:—"He is the most delightful person of my acquaintance, and his house is the most hospitable and comfortable I have ever stayed at; good shooting, admirable living and a charming wife. He displays an inborn, natural heartiness—*politesse de cœur*—nothing put on; what I should designate the politeness of benevolence, good-nature in the best sense of the word;" expressions which disclose the disposition of the praiser as well as of the praised. Only he who is himself inspired by the "politeness of the heart" can recognise it in others. I have many reasons for doubting that Herr von Keudell can be described as a friend of the Chancellor; I would rather say that, in a certain measure, he has for years past been Prince Bismarck's *confidant*. On the other hand, Lothar Bucher's value to the Chancellor was greater than that he possessed as a well-informed, faithful, unselfish and indefatigably industrious

amanuensis. In 1873 the Prince mentioned him to me as "a real pearl," and that in a tone and with a look that spoke of a good deal more than mere business utility.

The Chancellor's extreme sensibility reveals itself in many of his written and spoken utterances, as well as his strongly developed love of nature, of life in forest and field, of country pleasures and beautiful landscapes. He speaks of himself as "an enthusiast for Nature," and says that he loves the sea like a mistress; he has, moreover, the faculty of reproducing what he sees and admires in characteristic word-pictures of extraordinary charm, so full of warmth that they produce the effect of lyrical poems.

When, during his sojourn at Frankfort, it was first proposed to appoint him Prime Minister, he told an acquaintance that he wished to be an Envoy for ten years, a Minister for as long, and then to end his life as a country gentleman. In August, 1863, he wrote to his wife:—"I wish some intrigue would bring another Ministry into power, so that I might honourably turn my back upon this interminable flow of ink and live quietly in the country." During the campaign in France, and even as lately as 1883, he repeatedly expressed his yearning for retirement in the most uncompromising terms, saying that nothing prevented him from gratifying it but his reluctance to forsake the venerable Emperor. When he is residing upon his estates in Pomerania or in the heart of the Sachsenwald not a day passes during which he does not make an excursion in the neighbouring beech-woods and pine forests, or to some hill or river. He used often, when dinner-time summoned them home, to say to Bucher, who occasionally accompanied him: "Let us first ascend that height further on; it commands a delightful view." I have heard him say at Friedrichsruh—"What I like best is to be in well-greased

top-boots, far away from civilization;" and he has a name for every handsome tree at Varzin. The latter is his favourite place of abode; he loves to stroll about his park in the moonlight, during sleepless nights, and often dreamt of its woods, illumined by the rays of the setting sun, whilst in France during the war.

In the letters written to his wife and sister during his journeys abroad are to be found many highly descriptive literary sketches, full of colour and feeling; such as his view from Ofen Castle of "the dull silvern Danube and the dark mountains upon a pale-red ground—mountains waxing bluer and bluer, and then reddish-brown in the evening sky glowing behind them." I subjoin his lively descriptions of life on the Hungarian steppes between Danube and Theiss, and of the wilderness at Tomsjonaes.

"Picture to yourself a vast lawn, as smooth as a table, upon which as far as the horizon there is nothing to be seen but the tall, lank levers of the wells dug to supply the wild horses and cattle with water, thousands of whitey-brown oxen with horns a yard long, as flighty as deer, and of shaggy ill-favoured horses, looked after by mounted, half-naked herdsmen with sticks like lances, as well as enormous droves of swine—amongst them, here and there, a donkey carrying on its back the shepherd's sheepskin and sometimes the shepherd himself. Then great flocks of bustard, hares, a brackish pond covered with wild geese, ducks and plovers—these were the objects that we passed during our three hours' drive to Ketskemet. At five o'clock I arrived at Szolnok, where a parti-coloured crowd of Hungarians, Slovacks and Wallachians enlivens the streets, shouting out the wildest, maddest gipsy-melodies, the strains of which reach me here, in my room. Between whiles they sing—through the nose in sickly, whining minor discords—ballads

about dark eyes and the heroic death of some robber, in tones that remind me of the wind when it howls Lithuanian ditties in the chimney-pots. The women are generally well grown, some are extraordinarily beautiful, all have coal-black hair hanging down in heavy plaits behind them, tied with red ribbons. The married women wear upon their heads bright green and red kerchiefs or red velvet caps embroidered in gold, and on their shoulders very handsome yellow silken scarves, short black frocks and saffron-coloured high boots. Their faces are a yellowish brown; their eyes large, lustrous and black. On the whole, a group of these women displays a variety of colour that would please you, every individual hue asserting itself as energetically as possible."

His description of the Swedish landscape above referred to runs as follows:—"Not a town, not a village to be seen afar or near—only isolated settlers, wooden huts, and a few patches of barley and potatoes, scattered about amongst dead trees, lumps of rock and clumps of bushes. Picture to yourself a hundred square miles of heath, varied with strips of short grass and moorland and planted, sometimes so thickly as to be impenetrable, sometimes very sparsely, with birches, willows, alders, juniper, firs and oaks; the whole district bestrewn with countless stones, some of enormous size, and smelling of wild rosemary and resin; every here and there strangely shaped, still lakes, environed with heather-clad hills and woods."

From Peterhof he wrote:—"This is a charming place; Petersburg is so stony. Picture to yourself the heights of Oliva and Zoppot laid out like parks and studded with a dozen castles interspersed by terraces, fountains and ponds, with shady walks and turf right down to the sea; blue skies, white clouds and warm sunshine, beyond the green

lawns the sparkling sea, specked with sails and sea-gulls. I have not been so happy for a long time." Writing from Zarskoe Selo he said: "Across the table my window commands a view over the tops of birch and maple trees, the leaves of which display more red and yellow than green; further down the grass-green roofs of the little town, dominated by a church with five gilded towers shaped like onions; further still an endless plain of copse, meadow and forest, behind the brown-blue-grey tints of which the Church of St. Isaac at Petersburg may be espied with a telescope."

He thus describes the view, at nightfall, from the pavilion he occupied at Archangelski:—"On the other side of the water lie broad moonlit plains; on this side lawns, hedges and orangeries; the wind howls and the flames flicker in the chimney; old pictures stare at me from the walls, and statues peep in at the windows."

His word-pictures from France and Spain are as lively, highly coloured and full of feeling as those portraying Northern and Oriental landscapes; to wit, his sketches of Chambord Castle, of the country between Bordeaux and Bayonne, and of San Sebastian's Bay. Writing of the Legitimist stronghold to his wife from Bordeaux, he observed: "I have seen several fine châteaux hereabouts, amongst them Chambord, the desolation of which corresponds to the destiny of its owner. The Duke of Bordeaux's playthings constitute the entire furniture of those stately halls and splendid saloons in which Kings held Court with their mistresses and huntsmen. The courtyards lie as peacefully in the sunshine as forsaken graveyards. From the towers there is a fine view of silent woods and heaths, stretching away to the horizon; not a town, village or farmhouse near the castle nor in the whole district. Purple heather is the only flower in the Royal

gardens; swallows are nearly the only living things in the house. It is too lonely for sparrows." He describes the landscape between Bordeaux and Bayonne thus:—"Continuous pine forests, heather and moor—sometimes like Pomerania, as in the coast-woods behind the sand hills, sometimes like Russia. But when I looked at it through my glasses the illusion vanished. Instead of the pine it is the long-haired fir and a mixture of juniper trees and bilberry bushes that covers the ground, as well as all kinds of unfamiliar plants bearing leaves like those of the myrtle and cypress. The splendour with which the heather here develops its violet-purple blossoms is amazing; it is interspersed with a broad-leaved yellow bloom; the whole plain looks like a gaudy carpet. The river Adour, upon which Bayonne lies, frames in this heath, which aggravated my home-sickness by its tender idealisation of a northern landscape." From San Sebastian he wrote:—"The road from Bayonne hither is magnificent; on the left the Pyrenees with their varying panorama of peaks, on the right the sea with a coast like that near Genoa. The transition to Spain is startling; in Behodie, the last French town, one could believe oneself to be still by the Loire—in Fuentarabia one came upon a steep street, twelve feet wide, every window provided with a balcony and curtain, every balcony displaying dark eyes and mantillas, beauty and dirt; on the market-place drumming and fifing, whilst several hundred women, old and young, danced together, their husbands looking on, wrapped up in cloaks. The country hereabouts is extraordinarily beautiful—green valleys and wooded slopes, above the latter lines upon lines of fantastic fortifications, narrow sea-creeks penetrating far into the land and resembling the Salzburg lakes that lie at the bottom of mountain-cauldrons. From my window

I can see just such a creek, cut off from the sea by a rocky islet and surrounded by steep mountains studded with woods and houses. After breakfast we crawled through the heat up the citadel-mountain, and sat there for a long time on a bench, the sea some hundred of feet beneath us, and hard by us a heavy battery guarded by a singing sentry." From Luchon he wrote during the same tour: "Yesterday we climbed the Col de Venasque. First of all we journeyed for two hours through splendid beech-woods full of ivy, rocks and waterfalls; then came a *hospice;* then two hours more of stiff climbing on horse-back in the snow, enlivened by views of tranquil deep lakes lying between the cliffs; and then, at a height of 7,500 feet, a narrow portal in the rugged comb of the Pyrenees opens the way into Spain. The land of chestnuts and palms reveals itself here as a mountain-cauldron, walled around by the Maladetta, facing us, the Pic de Sauvegarde and Pic de Picade; on the right streams flow downwards to the Ebro, on the left to the Garonne, and as far as eye can see, in front of us, are glaciers and snow-clad peaks, one behind another, far away into Catalonia and Aragon."

Extremely happy is his description of Gastein, the last I shall quote. "I saw it for the first time in all its beauty during a delightful morning walk. Moritz von Blankeburg would call it a gigantic saucepan, narrow and deep, filled with cabbage and rimmed with white of egg. Steep walls several thousand feet high, flecked with firs, turf and cottages up to the snow-line, the whole ampitheatre wreathed around with the white lace and ribands wrought out of the snow during five rainy days, and the lower limits of which are hourly carried higher by the heat of the sun. Dozens of silvern threads traverse the green slopes—brooklets that dash down-hill hurriedly, as though they

feared to be too late for the huge waterfall which, together with the Ache, they make up right before my house."

From the above extracts we gather that Bismarck, whilst on his travels, took a deep interest in his fellow-men and exhibited no small talent as a *genre* painter. But nature unadorned, quiet green woods, lonely heaths and isolated lakes were still more sympathetic to him. So was the sea, of which he says, in a letter from Brussels (August, 1853):—"I left Ostende with regret, and am still longing to return thither, where I lighted upon an old love, as fascinating as when I first made her acquaintance. I feel our separation keenly just now, and impatiently await the moment when I shall see her again at Nordeney and fall upon her heaving bosom. I can scarcely understand how it is that I do not always live by the sea, or why I have allowed myself to be persuaded to spend two days in this straight-lined heap of stones."

Besides the love of nature revealed above, he is characterised by a strong liking for dumb animals and plants, a passion for field-sports and riding, a fondness for a country-gentleman's life, far away from the turmoil of cities, and a great partiality for agriculture and forestry. Like the Emperor William, he has his favourite flower; the Kaiser's is the corn-cockle, Bismarck's the heather, which he speaks of as "the plant I love best." Talking once at Versailles about his cowherd, Brand, "one of those old pieces of furniture with which the memories of my youth are indissolubly bound up," he observed:—"Whenever I think of him I am reminded of heather-bloom and buttercups." When he lived in Kniephof his huge Danish hound was renowned throughout the whole neighbourhood as a "favoured personage," and several young fox-cubs were attached to his household. These were succeeded in

Petersburg by a couple of young bears, which he allowed to range about the apartments of the Legation, like dogs, until—when they reached maturity—he presented them to the Zoological Gardens of Frankfort and Cologne. "Mischka" used to make his appearance at dinner-time, to the great amusement of his master's guests, and walk about gingerly enough upon the table amongst the plates and glasses, now and then clutching at the footmen's calves. "But for R—— and the sorrel mare," Bismarck wrote to his wife soon after his appointment to the Premiership in 1862, "I should sometimes feel lonely here, though I am never alone." At Varzin in 1877 a large Ulmer hound, given to him by Count Holnstein, always slept in his room, and with Floerchen, "its spouse," accompanied him in all his walks and rides, until some skulking vagabond brutally slew the faithful, harmless creature, which Bismarck was wont to feed with his own hand. As lately as last year a portrait of this four-footed friend was amongst the knick-knacks upon the Chancellor's writing-table. The actual "Realm-Hound" is not of so amiable a disposition as his official predecessor, but rather an ugly customer where strangers are concerned; nevertheless he stands in high favour with his master. Bismarck even reserved a corner in his heart for the rooks in Varzin Park, and it was pleasant to hear him tell how "they taught their children to fly, took them down to the coast to put them on a worm-diet, and withdrew during the winter, like people of fashion, to their town-residence in the towers of Stolp and Schlawe."

From his earliest youth up to his sixtieth year the Prince was an uncommonly good shot, an eager horseman and a sportsman no less assiduous than lucky. Later on, having lost strength, he by degrees gave up all these pleasures and accomplishments, one after another. As a young man he

became so expert with the pistol that he was wont to decapitate with a bullet duck after duck swimming on the Kniephof ponds. His rifle and fowling-piece were equally fatal to all sorts of furred and feathered game. As a steady and quick shot he earned renown in well-nigh every European country, and accumulated trophies, in the way of antlers and skins, with which the walls and floors of his house are adorned—spoils of his native forests, of the Taunus, Ardennes, Alps, of Rothschild's park at Ferrières, of Swedish mountains and Russian steppes. His skill and success in bear-, wolf- and elk-shooting were proverbial in the upper circles of Petersburg society. I could narrate half-a-dozen of his remarkable achievements in this line, which are "nothing but truth," although sportsmen are apt to exaggerate. He once started, with six other gentlemen, from Petersburg on a bear hunt. On their return somebody asked one of the party, "Well, how did you get on?" "Very badly, *batiouschka*," was the reply. "The first bear came trotting towards us; the Prussian fired, and Bruin fell dead. Presently another bear turned out; I fired and missed, and Bismarck knocked him over, almost at his feet, with a capital shot. All of a sudden a third bear broke out of the bushes. Colonel M—— fired twice and missed twice. Then the Prussian shot the bear right under his nose. So you see, he shot all three, and we never saw another one afterwards." On another occasion, besides stags and roedeer, he shot five elks, one of which measured 6 ft. 8 in. to his withers and carried a tremendous head. I saw the skin of this enormous brute in 1870 in the billiard-room of Bismarck's official residence in Berlin, where it was spread out upon the floor like a carpet.

During his younger years Bismarck performed many remarkable feats as a bold and untiring horseman. He

thought little of following the hounds across country for thirty to forty miles at a stretch. But even later, long after he became Prime Minister, he could do a good spell in the saddle when necessary, as, for instance, during the battle of Koeniggraetz, when he sat his horse for twelve hours, and the day after the fall of Sedan, when he was riding about from 6 a.m. till midnight. He was not always lucky on horseback; on the contrary, by his own confession, he has come down with his horse or been thrown some fifty times in his life, and more than once very badly—as once at Varzin, when he broke three ribs.

It is well known that Bismarck, whilst a student at Goettingen and Greifswald, was a skilful and vigorous fencer, and proved his expertness in thirty duels or so. That, later in life, he became an excellent swimmer is evident from his letters to his wife about long bouts of swimming in the Rhine, Danube and Theiss. In July, 1851, he wrote:—"On Saturday I drove with Rochow and Lynar from Frankfort to Ruedesheim. There I took a boat, rowed out upon the Rhine, and swam in the moonshine, just keeping nose and eyes above water, to the Mouse Tower at Bingen, where the wicked Bishop came to grief. There is something strangely dreamy in lying in the tepid water on a quiet warm night, swept along slowly by the current, gazing at the starry sky, the wooded hill-tops and ruined castles, and hearing nothing but the slight plashing caused by your own movements. I should like to swim thus every day." Still more conclusive than the above, as far as Bismarck's strength and skill as a swimmer are concerned, is the following incident. In 1842, then being a lieutenant of Landwehr, he was told off to exercise near Lippehne with the Stargard squadron of lancers. He was standing with some other officers upon the bridge that crosses the

Lippehne lake, when his groom Hildebrand, who was watering one of his horses, slipped from the saddle near where the gentlemen were posted, and vanished from sight. Bismarck at once threw away his sabre and plunged into the lake. He soon caught hold of his groom, who, however, clung to him so tightly in fear of drowning that, before he could shake him off, he was compelled to dive down again with him. Everybody present had given up master and man as lost, when Bismarck rose to the surface, dragging up the insensible groom with him, and swam to the bank, where Hildebrand presently came to himself again. The little town got into a great state of excitement over this gallant deed, which displayed such extraordinary physical strength, dexterity and presence of mind in its performer; and the local clergyman called upon Bismarck in full canonicals to congratulate him upon the Divine mercy vouchsafed to him. Later on the King conferred the medal for saving life upon the courageous young gentleman—his first decoration.

It would seem that the talent for learning foreign languages is more developed in the east of Europe than in the west. The French are least endowed with it; the Poles and Russians most so; the Germans stand about mid-way. We manage with tolerable ease to understand a book or newspaper in the idiom of a neighbouring country; but most of us experience great difficulty in speaking foreign tongues correctly and fluently, and are bad hands at mastering the accents of non-German languages. The Chancellor constitutes a brilliant exception to this rule. Speaking German absolutely purely, he has also made French his own tongue so completely that even a Genevese or Petersburger of the upper classes could scarcely find fault with his pronunciation. He also speaks English with admirable facility, and under-

stands Italian well enough to read the Italian newspapers. He is acquainted with Polish, and during his four years' sojourn by the Neva he studied Russian so assiduously that he can converse freely in that tongue. The late Czar Alexander was much impressed when Bismarck, one day, addressed him in his own language, no trifling feat for a German. The great mathematician, Gauss, once found it necessary to take up some abstract study as a relief to his special occupation. The choice was offered to him between the Russian language and the vast, complicated Linnæan system of botanical classification. He decided upon committing the latter to memory, and eventually succeeded in doing so. Russian, with its enormous wealth of forms and innumerable exceptions to every grammatical rule, appeared to him too difficult. The Chancellor is not so well up in the dead as in the living languages. "When I was in the first class at school," he told me at Ferrières, "I could write and speak Latin very well. Nowadays I should find it difficult to do either; and as for Greek, I have forgotten all about it."

Amongst the sciences, Prince Bismarck has always entertained a predilection for history, geography, and political economy. He is posted up in their literature and reads new historical works, such as Taine's admirable account of the rise and fall of the first French Revolution, with keen interest. In the matter of *belles lettres* he accords the palm to Goethe and Shakespeare. He says that he could pass many a year upon a desert island with some of Goethe's works for his sole companions. Schiller is less sympathetic to him, probably by reason of his pronounced dislike to a pompous and declamatory style; he regards the apple-shooting episode in 'William Tell' as unnatural, and the premeditated murder of Gessler from an ambuscade as unworthy of a hero.

Modern German literature is still less to his taste; he prefers the English and French novelists of the present day to the German writers of romances. "Send me a French novel," he wrote to his wife during the campaign in Bohemia, "but only one at a time." Seinguerlet makes "an English author" say that he saw huge piles of French light literature upon the Prince's writing table; but this may be doubted, and so may the assertion, on the same authority, that "Feydeau, Edmond de Goncourt and Flaubert are his favourite authors, and he has recently perused with interest the realistic creations of Emile Zola."

I cannot with precision define the Chancellor's attitude to the plastic arts. In Frankfort he associated a good deal with painters and sculptors, especially with Professor Becker, who has painted his portrait. But I remember nothing in his letters referring to these matters, and I have but seldom heard him mention artistic subjects or personages. Once during the French war, we were talking about the Brandenburg Gate, which he spoke of as "handsome in its way," observing that it would look better without the lateral colonnades, the Guard-House and the building opposite this latter. Moreover, his apartments in Berlin, Varzin and Schoenhausen by no means abound in artistic adornment, unless photographs, lithographs, and steel engravings may pass as such. A few oil-paintings decorate his study at Berlin; but up to 1877 there was not a single picture in his Schoenhausen sanctum, and the new buildings in Pomerania and the Sachsenwald have been fitted up in the simplest possible style. I infer from these facts that he does not take any very great pleasure in painting, sculpture, and architecture, not that he has no taste for them. Even were that so, it would not signify much. Lessing was a wretched Librarian, although a learned innovator and

highly respectable critic. Kant once observed: "A man may be a great philosopher and yet not play the flute well." Stein's scientific and literary education was a very poor one. Schoen wrote about him to Burgrave von Bruenneck:—"In the month of August, 1808, his poetic culture was at so low a level that he had not read any of Goethe's works. His friends teased and chaffed him for being over prosaic until he was induced to consent to read 'Faust,' a copy of which he obtained about 10 a.m. and sent it back to its owner shortly after 4 p.m., asking for the second part, which had not then been printed. I spent the evening of that day at Councillor Schaeffner's with Stein; and soon perceived, by his answer to my enquiry, 'How he liked "Faust,"' that he looked upon it as nothing more than a story-book. But he told me that he considered it an indecent work, not to be even mentioned in polite society. Nothing seemed to have struck him but the scenes in Auerbach's cellar, and upon the Blocksberg." And yet Stein was a man of rare intuitive talent and forcible character, in short, a first-class intelligence.

Nowadays the Chancellor visits theatres and the opera very seldom, if at all. Formerly it was otherwise. In 1852 he wrote to his wife from Vienna:—"I have just returned with old Westmoreland" (then British Minister at the Austrian Court) "from the Opera, where we heard 'Don Giovanni' performed by a good Italian company, which made me feel more than ever how miserable the Frankfort Theatre is." I cannot recall to remind that during the French war or in later years he has once referred to the stage and its celebrities in conversation. Once, I believe, he said a few words about Helmerding, the comic actor.

The Prince, however, takes a great interest in music, which he learnt to appreciate through Count Kaiserlingk

during his student life at Berlin. The classical composers, with Beethoven at their head, are his favourites. He does not play any instrument, but delights in the playing of others. Writing to his wife in 1851, he described his condition as "sound and hearty, but tinged with melancholy, home-sickness, yearnings for forest, ocean, desert, you and the children, all mixed up with sunset and Beethoven." In another letter he said:—"Yesterday after dinner I sat alone with Keudell in the blue drawing-room, and he played." Two years later he wrote from Baden: "This evening a quartet-party at Count Fleming's with Joachim, who really plays the fiddle wonderfully." In Versailles Herr von Keudell, the accomplished pianist and Councillor of Legation, played soft fantasias to the Chancellor on the drawing-room piano whilst we were taking coffee. On my asking him subsequently whether the chief took much pleasure in such performances, he replied—"Yes, although he is not musical;" adding: "You will have remarked that he hums all the while; that is good for his nerves, which are a good deal upset to-day." In the autumn of 1881, as the Prince and I were walking together along the winding paths of the park behind his Berlin palace, and talking about the newly-elected Reichstag, he began to hum the air of the student-song "Wir hatten gebauet ein stattliches Haus," and a little later on he began talking about the 'Luck of Edenhall,' to which he compared the German Constitution. The melody obviously suggested to his mind the simile and the idea connected therewith.

Immediately before the outbreak of the war in Bohemia Bismarck was driven to set a great stake upon one card—Prussia's position as a Great Power and his own fate. But neither in that nor in the ordinary sense of the word is he partial to games of hazard. He never participated in any

manœuvres on 'Change, as many another man of high station has done (not only in France, Italy and Austria), and for years past he has not touched a card. When a young man he was fond of whist, of which game he once played twenty rubbers running, remaining seven hours at the card-table; and at that time games of chance also had charms for him. "But," he remarked once, whilst talking on this subject, "they only interested me when played for high stakes, which was not the thing for a father of a family." It is true that as late as the summer of 1865 he took part in a game of *quinze*, but exclusively for a political purpose and with a diplomatic *arrière-pensée*. "It was," so he told us in Versailles, "when I concluded the Treaty of Gastein with Blome. Although I had given up play long ago, I played so rashly upon that occasion that all the others were lost in astonishment. But I knew well enough what I wanted. Blome had been told that *quinze* afforded the best possible opportunity for judging men's characters, and wished to try the experiment. I said to myself—'You shall find out all about it.' So I lost a couple of hundred thalers, which I might have claimed from the Government, as expended in His Majesty's service. But I led Blome astray; he deemed me rash and venturesome, and gave way."

As is but natural for a diplomatist, Bismarck keeps a good table; but he entertains no aversion to simple edibles and potables. For instance, he is very fond of pure corn-brandy, which he lays down together with the finest cognac in his cellars at Schoenhausen, to mellow with age and improve "for the benefit of his grandchildren." In Varzin, as he himself says, nothing comes to his table—except the wine, of course—that he does not grow or produce upon his own estates. Like Frederick the Great, he is a hearty eater when in good health; but it must be

remembered that as a rule he only eats once a day, at 6 p.m., and that people who think and work hard have to take a good deal of nourishment. Formerly an inveterate smoker, who smoked in the railway carriage all the way from Cologne to Berlin, lighting each successive cigar at the stump of its predecessor, he gradually gave up this enjoyment after 1870, on account of his health; the long pipe replaced the fragrant weed, and three years ago he told me one evening that he had left off smoking altogether, as it did not agree with him.

For many years past, viz: since his residence in Petersburg, the Prince's health has been far from good, although he does not look ill as a rule. He has repeatedly been attacked by severe and painful illnesses, such as shingles and neuralgia. That he should suffer from nervousness is scarcely to be wondered at. For more than twenty years the most momentous portion of German history has passed through his head, as well as no little of the history of neighbouring countries, with its enigmas, problems, confusions, tensions and dangers; and he has taken into consideration all these matters in serious earnest. In April 1878 one day at dinner he spoke of himself as "an old man;" the Princess interposed, "Why, you are only sixty-three," and he rejoined, "Yes; but I have always lived hard and fast;" then, turning to me, added, "By hard I mean that I always did what I had to do with all my might; whatever really succeeded I paid for with my health and strength." Next to the nervous irritability, accompanied by periodical sleeplessness, which is his chief complaint, his sufferings are mainly attributable to a stomach constantly out of order; besides which he is worried from time to time by a varicose vein in one leg, which alternated last February with neuralgic pains in the face. Wrath is very injurious

to his health. He is, however, kept copiously supplied with causes for anger by the stupidity and malignity of parliamentary parties, Liberal as well as Conservative, and of certain cliques at Court, which, during the struggle with the Ultramontanists and before the outbreak of the late war, strove to cross his plans by all sorts of intrigues and machinations, and to bestrew his path with stones.

The Chancellor is somewhat short-sighted, but does not require glasses when reading or writing; his hearing is uncommonly good. Like all nervous people he is partial to warm clothing and heated rooms. In Varzin and Friedrichsruh, as soon as the weather gets at all chilly, every room in the house, including the empty bedrooms and antechambers, is kept thoroughly warm. He is of a choleric disposition; the least vexation is apt to provoke him to volcanic outbreaks of temper. But the eruption rapidly subsides, and is never succeeded by sulkiness or rancour. On April 1, 1870, being summoned to his presence upon business, I congratulated him upon the recurrence of his birthday anniversary, expressing the hope that I should remain with him for a long time to come. He replied, "I hope so too. But it is not always agreeable to be with me; only people should not attach too much importance to my irritability." In reality the Prince's nature is a kindly one, compassionate and helpful. He has always been the poor man's friend, not only in words, like the Pharisaical Progressists and their political kinsmen and allies, but in deeds. He never oppressed or dealt hardly with his tenants and servants. In Bar le Duc he cut a thick slice of bread with his own hands, late at night, and took it out to the hungry sentry on guard before his door. After the battle of Beaumont I saw him giving brandy from his flask to marauding Bavarian camp-followers, and sharing

the contents of his cigar-case with them. After Sedan he sent me with good store of cigars to the wounded in the ambulances at Donchéry, remarking, "They like smoking even better than eating." He often visited the sick in the hospitals at Versailles, enquired how they got on, what sort of nourishment was supplied to them, and whether in sufficient quantity; made sure that the slightly wounded had amusing books to read, and, upon one occasion, having promised a soldier who longed for apple-sauce that he would send him some, ordered our cook to make it and had it conveyed to the invalid. He contributed unasked to a collection got up by the Princes and other illustrious personages at Royal Head-quarters for the purpose of giving a Christmas treat to the wounded and sick in the different lazareths of Versailles. He has been spoken of as an embittered man, a cynic and misanthrope, a satirist and backbiter. These are calumnies. He only hates and despises that which is unmanly in men; he only jeers at them when they make themselves ridiculous. It is not his fault that this is frequently the case. If it appear that Bismarck is incapable of picturing to himself human beings free from selfish aims and objects, his view of humanity is probably the outcome of experience, which has rendered him particularly susceptible to mistrust and suspicion and apt to the detection of deceit and pretence, of vile motives and evil practices. I could quote dozens of examples, the results of personal observation or derived from sources of unquestionable authenticity, in support of my assertions, viz., that nowhere under the sun are to be found more hypocrites, intriguers and liars; more vanity, falsehood, malignity, double-dealing and envy—than within the sphere of diplomacy and in the higher circles of Court-life, where prudence is the chief of all the virtues, and exalted

personages do well to be ever mindful of the Golden Rule, "Trust nobody who is visible to the naked eye."

Prince Bismarck draws no salary as a Prussian Minister. In his official capacity as Chancellor of the German Empire he receives £2,700 per annum. The rest of his income is derived from his estates, the acreage of which is very considerable. Owing to the prevailing low prices of grain and timber, however, they only yield a comparatively small revenue. Were Bismarck an ordinary nobleman, or even a Count, he might be considered wealthy; being a Prince, he can only be accounted moderately well off. Up to 1867 he only owned the Schoenhausen estate in the Altmark, about 2,800 *morgen* in extent, and mostly capital land. That year he purchased the Varzin property in Nether Pomerania with the endowment of £60,000 granted to him by the Prussian Diet. Varzin, to which he has since added the Sedlitz and Thorow estates, comprises some 30,000 *morgen*, consisting in great part of unproductive soil, some of which is not even suitable for fir-plantation. Four years later the Emperor, exercising his rights at Sovereign Duke of Lauenburg, bestowed upon his Chancellor the Sachsenwald domain, situate near Hamburg, and, at one extremity, abutting on the Elbe; an estate of 28,000 *morgen*, chiefly magnificent beech forests, and devoid of arable land as well as of any residential dwelling. To this the Prince has recently added the contiguous estates of Schoenau and Silk, as well as a large farm, which has not proved a profitable investment. The timber from the Varzin woods is disposed of to three manufactories of ligneous paper situate on the Wipper river; that felled in the Sachsenwald is sold to a great powder-mill standing on the Prince's land close to the Elbe, and is also worked up into posts and planks in some newly-established sawmills. Schoenhausen, Varzin

and the Sachsenwald all enjoy the advantage of being traversed or skirted by railroads, so that their products can be readily and cheaply conveyed to various markets. The residences on these three estates are neither roomy in size nor stately in appearance; but they are comfortably fitted up, and Friedrichsruh, where the Chancellor has turned an old house, formerly used for accommodating Hamburg summer-excursionists, into a sort of *château*, is a pretty spot enough, with its *entourage* of beeches and pines, amongst which a streamlet winds its way along. The Sachsenwald, by which it is surrounded, is worth—counting in the two adjoining estates—a little over £150,000, but does not at present yield an income of much more than £5,000 a year.

The Chancellor is an adept in farming and forestry, and has practised those sciences upon his estates successfully and profitably. In Schoenhausen he has planted about five hundred *morgen*, in part with oaks, which have thriven well. In Varzin he has busied himself with replanting an extensive beech forest, which the former owner of that property, misjudging the quality of the soil, had cleared and converted into arable of a lamentably unproductive character. Similarly, in other parts of the estate he has planted firs upon ground thitherto growing nothing but sand-oats and heather. He has also introduced all sorts of agricultural improvements upon the six estates which constitute his miniature realm in Pomerania, thus developing their productive capacities. At Friedrichsruh a park has been laid out behind the house; the Aue stream, running through it, has been regulated and cleansed; an oak forest situate on its right bank, which cannot thrive by reason of the excessive dampness of the soil, is being cut down, and will be replaced by a plantation of trees more suitable to the nature of the ground. With respect to all these alterations and innovations, the Chan-

cellor applies to nature the same rule he has enforced in many other directions (amongst others in that of politico-economical reforms) i.e.—"She must, whether she will or no." By ingenious manœuvring and indomitable perseverance, Bismarck compels Dame Nature, as far as in her lies, to submit to his rule and suffer herself to be improved.

Looking back to the last few pages of this chapter, the view they afford us of Bismarck as a horseman, sportsman, swimmer, &c., is doubly refreshing at a time like the present when anemic, colourless, hysterical and abstract existences multiply daily in the upper classes of society. We also see him surrounded on every side by the actualities of life utilising and contributing to them. He is at once farmer, forester, manufacturer, soldier, diplomatist and parliamentarian; he owns and manages breweries, distilleries and sawmills; he means to turn paper-maker as well. From both points of view he reminds us of Goethe, who—in the most extravagant *rococo* epoch of Gessner's idylls and Watteau's pictures—was so stout a horseman that, with Duke Karl August, he rode in one day from Leipzig to Weimar on the infamous roads of that period, and was moreover, a dancer, mountain climber, skater and marksman, a pedagogue, naturalist, financier and handicraftsman; in a word, an altogether concrete man, keeping touch, in a hundred ways, with the actual living world.

I will now conclude this chapter—and with it the book—by a brief reference to a few of the portraits of Bismarck taken at different periods of his life. In the year 1837 when he was two-and-twenty, his cousin Hélène von Kesse made a sketch of him, which is still in existence, and reproduces a luxuriant head of hair offering a striking contrast to the three hairs with which the Berlin caricaturists are wont to portray the Chancellor. A highly

successful counterfeit presentment of His Highness (which was hanging in the Princess's room up to 1877, but is now at Friedrichsruh) dates from his sojourn in Frankfort, and was painted by Professor Becker, a frequent guest about thirty years ago in the villa then occupied by Bismarck and his family in the Bockenhemer Land-strasse. The best latter-day portrait of the Chancellor is unquestionably Franz Lenbach's, which adorns the National Gallery at Berlin. Of the eight or ten sketches made by this artist preparatory to executing the oil-painting—sketches which have been published in a photographic form—the most admirable, to my taste, is that which represents the Chancellor *en profile*, gazing into the distance. It is extraordinarily like him, and his features wear a prophetical expression, perhaps attributable to the circumstances under which the likeness was taken. "We were engaged in conversation at Friedrichsruh," so the Prince himself told me a short while ago, "and I happened to look upwards at a passing flight of birds. Suddenly Lenbach exclaimed, 'Hold on! that will do capitally; keep quite still!' and forthwith made the sketch." The latest photographs of Prince Bismarck (taken in February 1883) portraying him with the full white beard he wore for a few weeks, about that time, are as good as photographs can be. But in one respect they are faulty. The beard hides the energetic chin which is as characteristic of the Chancellor as are his piercing eyes with their bushy brows.

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MORAL OF THE BOOK.

Into the frog-pond with the wilful blind
Who fail to recognise a master-mind.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
STAMFORD STREET AND CHARING CROSS.


00020062

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 05 October, 2018